012611 h 38

ELLINOR;

OR,

THE WORLD AS IT IS.

© BRITISH MUSEUM

ELLINOR;

OR,

THE WORLD AS IT IS.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

MARY ANN HANWAY.

Let high birth triumph! What can be more great?
Nothing,—but merit in a low eſtate.
To virtue's humbleſt ſon, let none prefer
Vice, tho' deſcended from the conqueror.
Titles are marks of honeſt men, and wiſe;
The fool, or knave, that wears a title, lies.

YOUNG.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Preſs,
FOR WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL-STREET.

M.DCC.XCVIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ELLINOR.

CHAP. I.

HAVING left our heroine in honourable ſecurity, we will take a retroſpective view of Howard; he was ſtill an attendant on his uncle, whoſe weakneſs and infirmities daily increaſed; they had been much accelerated by the buſtle and fatigue occaſioned by ſo long a journey, at his advanced period of life, which had rendered it impoſſible for him, now, to meaſure back the road to England, though it was become the firſt wiſh of his heart. His nephew tried, by every kind and dutiful attention, to mitigate his ſufferings, and cheer his drooping ſpirits, hardly ever

quitting his preſence, but devoting all his time to his amuſement.

The elder Mr. Howard, conſcious that his late behaviour to him did not merit ſuch ſacrifices, one day, as his nephew ſat by his couch, put into his hand the anonymous letter he had received, that was the occaſion of their quitting England. After Howard had peruſed it, he returned it to his uncle, ſaying, he was always conſcious, that he was indebted for the preſent journey to the miſrepreſentations of ſome ſecret enemy: but as he had promiſed to accompany him, he was determined to keep his word. He now, with much candour, recounted to his uncle the whole of Ellinor's ſtory, as told by herſelf; the offer he had made her of his hand, before their departure for the continent; of her refuſal, and the reaſons ſhe aſſigned for it; that in conſequence of his earneſt entreaties, ſhe had been induced to correſpond with him as a friend.

He

He now read to his uncle ſeveral of her letters, and concluded by aſſuring him, that he never did *love any* woman till he ſaw Ellinor, nor ſhould ever feel that paſſion for another. It was therefore his determination to offer himſelf once more to her acceptance, on his return to his native land; if ſhe continued to reject him, he meant to devote himſelf to a life of celibacy, as it was his *fixed* reſolution, never to be the huſband of any woman but Ellinor. The elder Mr. Howard, ſtruck with the candour and honour of his nephew's behaviour, which contraſted by his own, that had been all duplicity, appeared in ſo noble a point of view, he was truly ſhocked, when obliged to make the compariſon.

He took his hand, and ſaid, " My dear Harry, I beg your pardon; from ſuch a heart as *your's* I had nothing to fear; I ſhould have produced you this deteſtable letter, and have heard the juſtification of your conduct, before I dragged you at this diſtance from the

young creature, who appears ſo worthy of your affection; and I hope ſhe will reward you with her hand, as a recompenſe for all your dutiful kindneſs to a poor old man, whoſe ſordid avarice has brought him to die in a country, where all his hoarded wealth will not procure him ſix feet of conſecrated ground to lay his bones in. To move me, living, I know is impoſſible; but give your promiſe, deareſt Harry, that you will ſtay with me, to cloſe my eyes; then return with my body to England, and ſee it depoſited in the vault of my anceſtors; it is the only requeſt I have to make.

"At my death, you will find yourſelf in poſſeſſion of all my fortune, which is much larger than you conceive, and fully competent to enable you to live in ſplendour with your favourite Ellinor, with whom I ſincerely wiſh you may enjoy that felicity, your merit deſerves. I am *now* convinced that real happineſs in this life, is alone to be experienced from domeſtic enjoyments; and next to the duty we owe our Maker is that we owe to ſociety;

and

and when we fulfil it, in being good huſbands, and affectionate fathers, we are acting moſt acceptable in the eyes of our Creator. You, Harry, are calculated to perform well your part in both theſe relative ſituations, from the goodneſs of your heart, and the tenderneſs of your nature."

"Deareſt Sir, your kindneſs overwhelms me, and gives me credit for more virtues than I have any claim to."

"Say not ſo, my beloved Henry, though I never knew how truly to appreciate your worth, till ſince I left England, and have ſeen you daily exerting yourſelf to comfort and ſupport the *man*, who had torn you from the woman of your choice, merely on the malicious information of a baſe aſſaſſin, who anonymouſly ſtabbed your fair fame; this was aided by my own mercenary views, who could ſee no happineſs but in the enjoyment of *rank* and *fortune*. I know you will forgive me, Henry, for what I have made you ſuffer; though ſo widely miſtaken in the means, I ſtill *alone* wiſhed your comfort and gratification."

Howard, who forgot all the pain that abſence from Ellinor had made him ſuffer, in the preſent unexpected kindneſs of his uncle, thought he could not be too grateful for the approbation of his choice, and the conſenting to his marrying Ellinor, now poured out the effuſions of his overjoyed heart for his generous intentions in his favours. He promiſed never to quit him, unleſs he ſhould experience a renovation of his health, that ſhould enable him to return to England. Mr. Howard ſhook his head at this ſpeech, convinced from his feelings, he ſhould never reach his native land alive; he therefore thought he might as well draw his laſt breath at Naples, where he then was; his perturbed mind being made eaſy, by his nephew's promiſe, that his bones ſhould be laid to moulder, encloſed in *hallowed walls*, with thoſe of his progenitors.

Never, he uſed to ſay, let thoſe Lazaroni fellows throw, what they would call, the *old heretic*, into a pit, and think they did him a great

great favour in not giving his carcaſe to their *dogs*! In vain his nephew remonſtrated againſt his prejudices; and told him, if it was his wiſh, there were means to be found of laying him in conſecrated ground, *even* in Italy. But his uncle had lived beyond the age allotted to man, ſtill clinging zealouſly to all the antipathies, of the early proteſtants againſt the bigotry of popery, and even praying for the deſtruction of the *whore of Babylon*. To a mind like his, that wilfully ſhut his eyes againſt conviction, no arguments urged by Howard, could diveſt of ideas, imbibed in early youth, which had ſtrengthened by habit; he therefore ceaſed to ſpeak to him on the ſubject.

He devoted himſelf to ſmoothe the pillow of declining age; for Mr. Howard's complaints, which had more of langour and debility, than *pain*, attending them, received greater benefit from his nephew's tender attentions, than from all the preſcriptions o his phyſicians. He was therefore always

querulous and diſſatisfied, when he was not near him; but to ſuch a man as Henry Howard, the conſciouſneſs of performing his duty to the laſt branch of his family, and by his ſoothing aſſiduities, robbing the bed of ſickneſs of the moſt poignant ſting which ſuffering humanity is condemned to feel,—the neglect of *ſummer friends*, who partake our joys, and ſhare our pleaſures, but take wing, and leave us in the hour of mental ſorrow, and bodily diſeaſe. The acting right was to a man poſſeſſed of his ſentiments, a full compenſation for all the pleaſures and gratifications he was precluded from enjoying with his Italian friends, by whom he was much admired, and his ſociety courted.

Howard had conſtantly wrote to Ellinor, ſince his departure from England, and regularly received her anſwers: as ſhe always appeared by them to be happy and contented in the family of Sir James Lavington, he had hitherto tried to reconcile himſelf to his forced abſence from the woman to whom his whole

whole ſoul was devoted, and whom he loved with a paſſion little ſhort of adoration. He trembled for fear ſome more fortunate lover ſhould gain the heart of Ellinor, whilſt he was only honoured with her friendſhip; for his ſenſations told him, that he could not be contented with that *title only*.

He directly after the converſation he had held with his uncle, relative to his paſſion for Ellinor, wrote an account of the whole tranſaction, and the reſult of it, to the arbitreſs of his fate, uſing every argument that genuine paſſion could dictate, to induce her, on his return to England, to accept his hand, and ſhare his fortune. He fondly flattered himſelf, ſhe might be prevailed upon to accede to his wiſhes, as one of her principal objections was removed; his uncle being as deſirous *now* that ſhe ſhould be his wife, as he was formerly determined in his oppoſition to his choice. He concluded by ſaying, Mr. Howard ſtill lingered like an expiring taper, that as ſoon as he had cloſed his eyes, which

office he had ſolemnly promiſed to perform, he ſhould attend his remains to England; where, after having ſeen them depoſited in the mauſoleum of his anceſtors, he meant to throw himſelf at the feet of his charming Ellinor, and claim her charitable clemency, toward a *long* and patient ſufferer.

This letter was directed to Sir James Lavington's, and arrived a few days after Ellinor had quitted Avon place; it was ſent to her at Lady John's, who, being gone a a courſing with Sir Harry Hurry and his viſitors, ſhe had perfect leiſure to read, and reaſon on its contents, which ſhe took into her moſt ſerious conſideration, and thus ſhe thought aloud on the ſubject.

"Howard is, except Sir James Lavington, I believe, one of the beſt of men, honeſt, generous, and juſt; his mind fraught with good ſenſe, and a heart that overflows with divine philanthropy for all the ſons and daughters

daughters of affliction. With ſuch a huſband, a woman *muſt* be happy; of what import is it, while his eyes beam with affection for me, whether they are black or *celeſtial blue?* or when his benignant ſoul is exhibited in the complacent ſmiles that illumine his face, can it be of any *real* conſequence to his wife, whether the complexion they adorn, has to boaſt the lily blended with the roſe; or the texture of his ſkin be like the duſky hyacinth, emblematic of his mind, unfluctuating as his affection, firm as his honour, decided as his principles. To the woman who is capable of appretiating mental beauties, the caſket in which they are lodged, will alone be valued for the jewels it contains.

"Can I accept the generous offers of Howard, while I am thus able coolly to reaſon, deſcant on his merits, and philoſophiſe on his paſſion? Alas! the flame of *love* that is conſuming *him*, warms not *me!* no, mine is a lambent fire, kindled by the ſparks of friendſhip: that electric fluid that ſhakes reaſon on her throne, that vivid enthuſiaſm that compels the vota-

ries of love to deeds of deſperate daring, that buries the finer energies of the ſoul in morbid melancholy, or deſponding imbecility, which poets have deſcribed, philoſophers deſcanted on, and which forms the *baſis* of every modern novel, moſt aſſuredly I do not experience."

"Perhaps I am incapable of feeling the paſſion in a greater degree, than I now do for the worthy Howard; deprived from my birth by ſome malignant planet, of the tender aſſiduities of parents, no dear relatives to claim and call into action the ſenſibilities of my nature, it may have grown *callous* from my life having been hitherto paſſed in a ſtate of torpidity: though I feel poignantly the ſenſations of gratitude and friendſhip, my heart may not be ſuſceptible of *love* in an equal degree with thoſe *lapped* in eaſe and affluence. Could I thus think of my ſenſations, I would throw myſelf into the protecting arms of Howard, on his return to England, ſhould he then retain the ſame predilection for the poor and deſerted Ellinor.

"But

" But what do I ſay? faithleſs memory had, for a moment, made me forget that a ſtain has been thrown on my character ſince his departure, with which he is unacquainted; for though *two* kind friends believe me guiltleſs of the crimes alledged againſt me, the world ſtill pretends to think the ſtigma merited. Should the goodneſs of Howard's heart, and his confidence in mine, induce him to believe me ſtill worthy of his hand, can I in honour accept it, and allow the man, whoſe worth I venerate, to ſully his unblemiſhed name, by beſtowing it on an outcaſt of ſociety, who will bring him neither fortune, friends, nor fame?

" No, I am more than *ever* determined, I will *not marry*, till the clouds that ſurround my birth, and the unjuſt aſperſions under which my character now labours, are fully cleared, and my innocence allowed by my preſent accuſers. If theſe bleſſings be in ſtore for me; if I be acknowledged by my parents, and Howard's paſſion meets their approbation, and I feel conſcious I can reward his diſintereſted generoſity

generoſity by contributing to *his* happineſs who thus eagerly ſeeks *mine*, then will I with grateful pride *offer* him my hand."

Pleaſed with this determination, which the rectitude of her heart convinced her was right, Ellinor ſat down to anſwer Howard's letter: here again ſhe was obliged to act with duplicity, that was moſt abhorrent to her principles; ſhe dared not acquaint him with Campley's late conduct, and her conſequent ſufferings; for Howard had ſaid in his comments on the baſeneſs of his expoſing him to his uncle's reſentment, which might have robbed him of his fortune, that he ſhould hold himſelf obliged to require an explanation from the gallant Colonel, as ſoon as he reviſited Britain, for the motives by which he had been actuated. Ellinor knew, that if he was informed of his late villanous behaviour to her, and that by it, the happineſs of calling her his wife was protracted, if not totally deſtroyed; that, warmed by her wrongs and his own, Campley's *life*, or what was a

thouſand

thouſand times of more conſequence, *Howard's*, would be the forfeit.

To delay, if ſhe could not prevent, ſuch ſanguinary meaſures, ſhe only repeated the grateful ſenſations ſhe felt for his generous attachment to her, congratulated him on being reſtored to the confidence and affection of his uncle, returned her thanks to that gentleman for his kind intentions in her favour; regretted, that ſhe was *ever fated* to appear ungrateful to the friend of her heart, in being ſtill obliged to requeſt him, to accept for his laviſh and diſintereſted offers of love and fortune, only ſincere friendſhip and heart-felt gratitude. *More* ſhe had not to *give*, as her former determination never to marry, till ſhe knew the authors of her exiſtence, ſtill remained in full force.

She then merely acquainted him, that ſhe was gone to reſide at Bramble Hall, under the kind protection of Lady John Dareall, who did every thing a woman of ſentiment and humanity

manity could, to render ſuch an iſolated being comfortable. She added, that fate had placed barriers between her and *happineſs* that were impregnable: ſhe was therefore in future determined not to attempt with "vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itſelf," to reach the temple of the goddeſs, or aſpire to her crown of *thornleſs roſes*; but ſhould confine herſelf to the humble walk, that ſkirts the baſe of the mountain, on whoſe proud ſummit is reared the glittering palace of that deity, who has been ſought by, and eluded the ſearch of all created beings ſince order ſprung out of chaos.

She had therefore determined to compoſe a wreath of thoſe unobtruſive flowers that adorned the vale—the pale primroſe, the modeſt the lily, fragrant violet, and bluſhing wild roſe, whoſe ſweet odours are paſſed unheeded by, or trampled under the feet of the volatile votaries of faſhion, in their eager purſuit after *Happineſs*; who think the direct road to her temple, lies through the ſlippery and deſtructive

ſtructive paths of *pleaſure*, but 'ere they have proceeded far, are loſt in the flowery mazes of *Folly*. Miſled and tired in purſuing a phantom, who aſſumes the appearance of the goddeſs they ſeek, to deceive her purſuers, ſhe, when they think they have her within their graſp, drops her maſk, and ſhews them *Diſappointment*. Convinced, that the only road to attain *Happineſs*, is through the humble path of *Content*, ſhe meant ſteadily to purſue its tract in her journey through life.

Thus did Ellinor try to amuſe Howard, by a *fanciful allegory*, that he might be led to believe ſhe had formed her mind to her condition; but of the cauſes of her leaving Sir James Lavington's family, ſhe avoided all diſcuſſion; we have ſeen her reaſons for not acquainting him with the whole ſtory, and ſhe could not bring herſelf to recount a garbled one: therefore left him to draw his concluſions, and form his own conjectures.

CHAP. II.

ELLINOR had now been ſome weeks with Lady John, who appeared very much attached to her; ſhe appropriated to her ſole uſe a ſuite of apartments, and deſired that ſhe would conſider herſelf miſtreſs of them, and her time; adding, "my dear girl, our educations have been diametrically oppoſite; of courſe, ſo will be our purſuits; I am not going to arraign yours, or juſtify my own; it would be the extreme of folly to expect either ſhould ſecede from early habits; "as the tree is faſhioned ſo it will grow." I therefore wiſh you to amuſe yourſelf in that way moſt congenial to your feelings, and moſt conducive to your pleaſure. I will do the

ſame;

ſame; thus all reſtraint removed, we ſhall feel ourſelves free denizens, and your mind, diveſted of the galling yoke of dependence, I hope will find itſelf as happy as it can be, till you are in the protecting arms of a good huſband. Thus, throwing off the ſhackles of form and ceremony, to which I have a natural antipathy, we will meet when it is mutually agreeable, ſtay together as long as we find it pleaſant, and part when we are tired."

Ellinor properly thanked her generous and liberal-minded friend, whoſe *plan* ſhe was well pleaſed to adopt; who was guided in her conduct towards her, as ſhe was to all others who looked up to her for protection, on the broad baſe of univerſal philanthropy. Lady John's happineſs, conſiſted in ſeeing herſelf ſurrounded by ſmiling faces; to accompliſh this, ſhe comforted the afflicted, and relieved the diſtreſt; but under the ſevere penalty of her everlaſting diſpleaſure, if they ever announced who was their benefactreſs. Oſtentatious charities being the *rage*, and

public

public contributions the *ton*, none gave Lady John credit for thoſe ſhe performed in *ſecret*. Ellinor ſoon diſcovered her *real* character, and the motive of her actions; ſhe therefore looked on her eccentricities as trifling ſpots in the ſun of her perfections, that ſometimes obſcured its rays; while ſhe worſhipped with enthuſiaſm that glowing and animated effulgence, which had ſhed its kindlieſt beams on her; cheered by its warmth, and raiſed her ſinking head from the earth, where it was about to be cruſhed by proud oppreſſion.

Soon after Ellinor was agreeably ſituated at Bramble Hill, ſhe began to taſte the real pleaſures of independence, being the uncontroulled miſtreſs of her time and actions; for, in compliance with Lady John's requeſt, they interfered not in each other's purſuits. She had preſented her young friend with a horſe beautiful and gentle, on which ſhe ſometimes accompanied her ladyſhip a *courſing*. This did not often happen, as the *cries* of the poor hare, when ſeized by the greyhounds

greyhounds, always thrilled through the ſenſitive boſom of Ellinor: when ſhe apoſtrophiſed to herſelf;" of how much conſequence in forming our characters through life, is an early attention to education, for that alone could have made Lady John, whoſe heart is compoſed of the fineſt fibres, in whoſe mind humanity is the predominant feature, hunt down with dogs, the moſt innocent and harmleſs of the four-footed race; even find a pleaſure in the purſuit of the little fugitive, a gratification in the laſt *ſhriek* of the expiring trembler, when ſeized in the fell jaws of her devouring enemy.

"It is moſt true that all the hares could not live, without our fields being over-run with them; but why hunt the timid creatures to death? why, in ſavage ſport, prolong their miſery. It is a cruel ſatisfaction to witneſs their deſtruction; I think it even unmanly; I am ſure it is *unwomanly!* Oh, that I could perſuade my dear Lady John to think on *this* ſubject with thoſe tender ſenſations ſhe does on all *others.*"

Sir

Sir Harry, who was often their gueſt, was frequently accompanied by his trio of friends, who found Leveret Lodge and its neighbourhood, ſo pleaſant ſince Ellinor had formed a part of Lady John's family, that they had been eaſily prevailed on to lengthen their viſit.

That ancient piece of knight-errantry, the duke of Southernword, was conſtantly making love to Ellinor in his *way*; taking her out to dance a minuet, or ſinging *petit chanſons* while ſhe played on the harp. From a man of his rank and age ſhe looked on all this as *mighty ridiculous*; it only moved her contempt; but ſhe never ſuſpected him to be ſerious, when he vowed he adored her, and ſwore, by the ſhades of his illuſtrious anceſtors, ſhe was an angel, and he could no *longer* exiſt without her. "Nor with her either, moſt puiſſant prince," cried Lady John, who had juſt then entered the room, laughing heartily, and giving him a ſlap on the back that made his frail frame totter; "if we are to eſtimate your abiding with us according to the *age* allotted

allotted to man, you will ſoon be gathered to your noble progenitors, as 'that *Doomſday Book* of youthful love and young deſires, y'ecleped Collins's Peerage, has long ſince announced you, to be paſt your grand climacteric."

The Duke, vexed, and mortified, at Lady John's irony, as he perceived that Ellinor enjoyed the laugh againſt him as much as her friend, took a haſty leave and retired, muttering curſes between his toothleſs gums, on the ſatirical wit and pointed ridicule of Lady John, vowing lover-like vengeance on her diverted companion; but ere he had paced back on his *poney* to Leveret Lodge, all his paſſions cooled, except the one he conceited he felt for Ellinor. He was conſcious coercive meaſures at his period of exiſtence were not the moſt deſirable, though he ſtill thought his perſon and mind retained all the vigour of thirty. He therefore came to the determiation of writing to Ellinor, and making her

ſuch offers of ſplendor, if ſhe would accept his protection, that, he argued himſelf into the conviction, muſt have their due weight with a young creature fated to ſwallow the bitter bread of dependence, whom nobody choſe to own; and of courſe, if he failed in his iniquitous attempt, ſhe had no relation to reſent the inſult. Ere he reached Leveret Lodge, he had ſettled the buſineſs to his own ſatisfaction: as ſoon as he arrived, he ſat down to his ſecretary, and produced the following epiſtle, which he ordered the officious parſon Danglecourt to impreſs with a ſeal, imblazoned with numerous heraldric quarterings, embelliſhed by ſupporters, and crowned with a ducal coronet; thinking ſuch a pompous cement, could not fail of inſuring a welcome to whatever *bombaſt* it encloſed.

"ADORABLE ELLINOR,

"LET the violence of that love which propels me to write, induce you to forgive the temerity of the moſt enamoured

of

of men, who pierced through the heart by the glances of the brighteſt eyes in the univerſe, dares to throw himſelf at the feet of his enchanting conqueror; permit me therefore, moſt lovely of your faſcinating ſex, to ſee you. I will not allow myſelf to deſpair; for the flatterer Hope whiſpers, that if you give me an opportunity to plead my paſſion at your feet, the gentleſt of boſoms will catch a ſpark of that vivid flame, by which mine is ſcorched. Depend upon it, a life of freedom can alone be a life of happineſs. Reſtraint is the bane of bliſs; the luxurious pleaſures of the globe, were alone created for the gratification of thoſe who know how to enjoy them. The ſyſtem of *Epicurus* has been the rule of my actions, and the guide of my conduct from early youth to the preſent moment.

'Life's but a ſpan, I'll ev'ry inch enjoy.'

"Come then, and be a diſciple of the only philoſophy worth the ſtudy of wiſdom.

I do not offer you the ſhackles of matrimony, becauſe I have long ſeen their inefficacy to ſecure either gratitude, affection, or conſtancy, to its votaries; their fallacy is become proverbial, from the court to the city. Be aſſured, my fair enſlaver,

"Love, free as air, at ſight of human ties,
"Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies."

"That our flames may never experience abated fervour, my lovely Ellinor ſhall "be free as winds, and unconfined as air;" I will make you independent even of *myſelf*, content to owe all my bliſs to your generous affection. You ſhall have a ſuperb town houſe immediately fitted for your reception; a charming *cottage ornée* in all the *ſtudied ſimplicity* of faſhionable elegance, to retire from the buſtle of public admiration, to the private devoirs of your adoring Southernwood, who will take upon himſelf to prepare every thing for your accommodation. A ſuite of ſervants ſhall wait your nod; the

moſt elegant equipage that can be produced by Hatchett, ſhall attend your commands. I will ſettle on you, free from all reſtrictions, a thouſand pounds a year: haſte then, moſt divine of your ſex, to ſhake off the diſguſting trammels of that diſagreeable, boiſterous, ſatirical devil, Lady John Dareall; leave her to the only gratifications ſhe is capable of appreciating—the pleaſures of her ſtable, and the joys of her dog kennel,—within whoſe vortex lie her proper companions, and from their ſociety is derived all her enjoyments. Fly then from brutal ferocity, and mental apathy, to that elegance more congenial to your ſoul; and the independence that courts your acceptance, in the ſplendid eſtabliſhment which awaits you, from your adoring.

SOUTHERNWOOD."

The difficulty now was how to get this flaming love-letter delivered to Ellinor without the knowledge of Lady John. This hazardous enterpriſe was undertaken

by Monſieur Coquin, his French valet; who had long acted as his *Charge d'Affaires*, in all his maſter's *little* amours, but who had never before been deputed to ſo ſplendid an embaſſy; though like all other plenipotentiaries, he knew the utility of *gold*, in carrying on a negotiation.

A purſe full of the ſhining metal, aided by a large portion of flattery, prevailed over the ſcruples of the blooming Bloſſom; and ſhe was induced to lay this delectable epiſtle on the dreſſing table of Ellinor, who overlooked it when ſhe retired for the night, but it met her eyes in the morning. As heraldry had made no part of her ſtudies, ſhe was at a loſs to gueſs who was her correſpondent, by the blazoned impreſſion on the wax; ſhe therefore, with the letter in her hand, deſcended to the breakfaſt room.

On her entrance ſhe ſaid, "my dear Lady John, I muſt intreat you to look at this ſeal, and tell me if you know whoſe it is,

is, for I found the packet on my toilette this inſtant, though to whom I am indebted for it, or how it came there, I am yet to learn."

"I can very eaſily gratify your curioſity; it is the armorial bearings of the doughty duke, who vaniſhed ſo haſtily yeſterday on receiving a ſlight touch from my taliſman of *truth*; and I ſuppoſe," ſhe added laughing, "this epiſtle is to offer his withered hand to your acceptance. Acknowledge, Ellinor, do you not feel your little heart flutter, at the idea of the dutcheſs of Southernwood's carriage "ſtops the way; her grace's chair is ready?"

"Not at all, I feel perfectly cool at the proſpect."

"I hardly know how to believe you, for though you had philoſophy enough, to refuſe being the lady of a country baronet, think you that you have magnanimity ſufficient to drive to death, and deſperation, this princely paramour? for though he has been ſighing at the feet of all the grandmothers of the preſent race of beauties, and

ogling their ſucceſſours for the laſt fifty years, as he is an *ever-green* in love, he has ſtill ſome remains of the paſſion left, to beſtow on you. If his vows be not ſo fervid as they were, in the hey-day of his blood, and his ſighs are a little aſthmatic, you muſt conſider, there are a hundred thouſand *weighty* reaſons, that prudence could throw into the ſcale to induce you not to be inexorable to his humble ſuit."

"I think your ladyſhip has given much more conſequence to my attractions, than they will be found to have merited, when you ſuppoſe them to be powerful enough to prevail on the Duke of Southernwood,—who is ſo proud of his nobility,—and holds at ſuch an immenſe diſtance the race of plebeians, from which he ſuppoſes me to have ſprung; he will not moſt certainly ſully his high blood with the puddle that flows in my humble veins. I am rather of opinion, that this letter contains offers that will degrade me below my own ſtandard in exiſtence, inſtead

ſtead of propoſals to elevate me to his high rank."

"Impoſſible, you do him injuſtice; he *dares* not think of ſuch an inſult to a young woman under my protection; but you have now made me eager to learn the truth. Come, break up the pompous cover, read the contents, and acquaint me with its purport. Perhaps, after all, it is merely to aſk for the copy of a ſong, or ſome ſuch bagatelle."

Ellinor, who ſaw in the brilliant eyes of Lady John, that emitted ſparks of etherial fire, the conflict of warring paſſions that ſhook her frame, trembled to break the ſeal; ſhe therefore gave it to her ladyſhip, who tearing it open, haſtily read its contents, while her face glowed with indignation; putting it into her pocket, ſhe ſaid, "I will anſwer it, if you will give me leave, my poor girl; and I promiſe to free you from the future inſults of this old dotard."

"I entreat your ladyſhip to let me ſee it, though your kindneſs would ſave my feel-

ings, by detaining from me what you think will give me uneaſineſs; I like to know the worſt that fate has in ſtore for me: beſides I deſpiſe this duke too pointedly, to be *hurt* by any thing *he* can ſay. Had he really, as your fond partiality led you to ſuppoſe, offered his hand and fortune to my acceptance, I ſhould have refuſed both without a ſecond conſideration. I will never ſacrifice myſelf to a man that I neither love nor eſteem, becauſe he can beſtow on me rank and riches; my heart tells me, how very miſerable I ſhould be in their poſſeſſion, if attained by ſuch means."

"Alas! that is too true," ſighed Lady John, "it is very poſſible to be ſplendidly wretched."

"Therefore as you ſee, my beſt, my only friend, that I can reaſon coolly on the ſubject, let this *man*, I will not call him *noble* becauſe his conduct degrades the title, be treated with ſilent contempt. Condeſcend not to notice his inſolent letter."

" You are a good girl, and excite my admiration, by the ſtrength of your mind, and the energetic powers you ſhow, when it is called into action. You, my dear Ellinor, have been nurſed in the rugged ſchool of adverſity; it has taught you that uſeful leſſon, to bear, and forbear. You reaſon on your misfortunes, and have a command over your paſſions; that I, who am more than old enough to be your mother, can only admire, without a capability of imitating.

" Here, take the ſcrawl; it ought only to excite your mirth, at the ſuperlative vanity of its author, who could flatter himſelf with the idea of raiſing any paſſion in the breaſt of a beautiful young woman, but contempt. Silence from you, is very proper toward your antiquated Adonis; but it is equally incumbent on me to *notice* the affront he has offered to myſelf, by making ſuch propoſals to my *protegée*. I ſhall not mention this to Harry, becauſe he may take it into his head, that he ought to reſent it; but I ſhall ſhow this *graceleſs* peer, that I am very capable

pable of doing it, and protecting you myſelf." She then ſnatched up a pen, and wrote the following

NOTE.

"Lady John Dareall informs the Duke of Southernwood, that Miſs Harcourt has juſt made her acquainted with the inſolent offer he has had the preſumption to make her, while under the protection of Lady John; ſhe takes leave to aſſure his grace, that ſhe is not at all inclined to treat the affront offered to Miſs H—— with the ſupreme contempt that young lady means to do: ſhe therefore warns him to ſend no no more ſuch letters to her houſe, on pain of having his *Charge d'Affaires* drawn through the horſe-pond; and ſhould his grace think proper to haunt the environs of her domains, to ſigh forth to her friend that paſſion which his conduct degrades, Lady John will try if the foilies of *ſecond* childhood, are not to be cured, like thoſe of the *firſt*, by the well-timed diſcipline of a horſe-whip."

When

When ſhe had read this note to Ellinor, ſhe immediately diſpatched it to Leveret Lodge. No ſooner was it peruſed by his Grace, than he execrated the girl for her folly, in ſhewing his letter to her virago friend, fully convinced, from the freedom he had taken with her in it, that ſhe would make no *ſcruple* to do *all*, and *more* than ſhe had threatened, if he ſhould be unfortunate enough to meet her in his preambulations.

He likewiſe feared being called to an account for his behaviour to Ellinor, by his hoſt, Sir Harry, of whoſe honourable offers to that lady, he was no ſtranger. He therefore reſolved to decamp without beat of drum; ringing for Monſieur Coquin, he ordered him to let his travelling carriage be prepared directly, as he ſhould ſet off, within an hour, for London.

" Give me leave, my Lord Duke, to congratulate you," ſaid this pander of his maſter's vices, " that you have ſo ſoon ſuc-

ceeded; I ſuppoſe the beautiful lady, at Bramble Hall, accompanies *us*."

"No, no, I think not of the lady," ſputtered the mortified Duke, "I leave to her fate;—the woman who is mean enough to prefer dependance on that termagent Dareall, to the luxurious joys ſhe might have experienced in my protection——. So, no more words, vaniſh inſtantly, and prepare for my departure."

Monſieur Coquin took himſelf off with a *ſhrug*, perceiving he had deen rather unfortunate in his premature congratulations.

Ellinor heard the pleaſing intelligence of her antiquated admirer having left the country, from Sir Harry, the ſame evening; who ſaid, the Duke had received a ſummons to meet the *privy council*, on matters of the higheſt national importance, which obliged him to return to town directly, and had prevented his taking leave.

Lady

Lady John ſmiled ſignificantly at Ellinor, but her good ſenſe prevented her from acquainting even her favourite Harry, that ſhe knew the motives for the haſty retreat of the Duke; convinced that no woman can have cauſe for triumph, in having created a paſſion in the breaſt of even the firſt man in the realm, if by it, he is induced to make her propoſals, from which the pride of virtue ſhrinks, that muſt degrade and mortify her in her own eyes. For theſe cogent reaſons, not a word was ſaid on the late tranſactions of the Duke of Southernwood.

CHAP. III.

A dead calm now prevailed for above a Month; Ellinor might be truly ſaid to enjoy it, after the late ſtorms ſhe had experienced; though ſhe was fearful of the machinations of Campley, whoſe plotting head, and bad heart, ſhe was conſcious, required all her vigilance to guard againſt. He ſtill continued an inmate of Morton Abbey; as did Lady Fanny; ſhe therefore never went out, even to walk round the park, without being accompanied by Lady John, by whoſe ſide ſhe always felt herſelf ſecure from inſult.

Sir Harry had kept his promiſe, of never reurging his ſuit, contenting himſelf with her friendſhip. The Lavington's remained in Berkſhire.

Berkſhire. Lady John had received ſeveral letters from Sir James, to enquire after her health, and of that of his favourite Ellinor, the loſs of whoſe ſociety he moſt feelingly deplored. The melancholy ſtyle in which they were conceived, evidently proclaimed the ſombre clouds, that tinged the mind of the unhappy writer: on peruſing them, Ellinor's ſuſceptible ſoul, always caught the ſorrowful contagion, and involuntary ſighs heaved her boſom, on reflecting that *ſhe* was the occaſion of his preſent grief; *ſhe* who would cheerfully have forgone every gratification, where herſelf was concerned, to have alleviated, inſtead of adding to thoſe woes the beſt of men was fated to ſuffer.

About this period, Lady John received a letter from the ſteward of the Duke of Dreadnought, acquainting her, that his Grace lay in a ſtate of perfect bodily debility, but that his intellects were ſtill vivid; his phyſicians had pronounced that he could not live many weeks; that he wrote to her ladyſhip,

ſhip, by the Duke's order, to ſay that he expected his nephew, the Honourable Mr. Dareall, hourly, from the continent, whom he fondly flattered himſelf, would not again leave him, till he had cloſed his eyes; and not doubting her ladyſhip's eagerneſs to ſee, and embrace her ſon, he ſolicited her to come directly ro London, that he might have the pleaſure of witneſſing their mutual happineſs. It concluded by ſaying, his Grace had ordered apartments to be prepared for her Ladyſhip's reception in Groſvenor-Square.

On the receipt of this epiſtle, Lady John went to Ellinor's dreſſing room, with it in her hand.

" Here is good news for you, child, we muſt depart for London,—and that directly, to that vortex of vice and folly, which I always enter with regret, and depart from with pleaſure. Bred among woods and wilds, I ever felt myſelf as much out of my element,

element there, and as mopingly miſerable, as a *caged fox*, at Exeter-'Change; but you, Ellinor, muſt ſee this journey in a very different point of view. With a poliſhed education, and a lively fancy, that renders you capable of appreciating the amuſements of the gay and grave, you muſt rejoice to leave dirty lanes, bleak commons, and leafleſs trees, for operas, balls, and concerts;—come, confeſs, am I not right?"

"Thus preſſed, my dear Lady John, candour obliges me to own, that in your company, I have no objection to reviſit the great city; for though I doat on the beauties of Nature, when ſhe appears clad in her vernal livery, bringing on her tepid gales, buxom health, that exhilarate the ſpirits to joyous, and innocent hilarity; but as I am too cowardly to experience any gratification in purſuing the ſports of the chace, I do not equally admire the country, at this ſeaſon, clothed in her ruſſet robe; or when ſtern Winter has ſtripped the branches of their charming foliage, and driven my favourite

birds

birds to ſeek a more genial clime; when the black ſtorm howls through the foreſt; the deſolating north-eaſt, driſts from the leafleſs trees the flaky ſnow, and the flowing rivers are bound in froſty chains; at this ſeaſon, when all the vivifying powers of nature appear in a ſtate of total ſtagnation, I muſt allow,

"Crowded cities pleaſe me then,
"And the buſy hum of men."

"My dear girl you are perfectly right, always, when called on for your opinion, ſpeak as you have now done, your real ſentiments; had you, becauſe I *hate* London, thought it incumbent to ſay you did ſo, I ſhould have thought you a hypocrite, and deſpiſed the meanneſs of your conceſſions, though they were meant to flatter my favourite propenſities. Never, Ellinor, becauſe you may be obliged to another for the means of ſupport, let that conſidertaion induce you to enſlave your mental faculties,

or

or ſacrifice the honeſt dictates of your heart to a miſtaken idea of gratitude for benefits received. When you feel that your principles are ſound, your ſentiments juſt, and your opinions founded on conviction, avow them with candour, enforce them with coolneſs, and defend them with energy.

" But I am arguing when I ſhould be acting. By this letter I find, that my poor brother, the Duke of Dreadnought, draws near the end of all his worldly pain: full dearly has he paid for the follies of early diſſipation. From the time I married Lord John, at which period the Duke was ſuppoſed to be dying, he has dragged on a miſerable exiſtence; unbleſſing and unbleſſed; kept alive by art—not allowed to die, or enabled to enjoy life—a breathing *memento* of departed pleaſures. He expreſſes a wiſh to ſee me; my ſon is daily expected, whom I ardently long to fold to my boſom: ſhould he prove worthy my affection, how will my heart expand to receive him; but if I am fated not to find him ſuch as that heart can approve,

approve, it will at once reject and close on him for *ever*. I cannot be blind to his faults because he is my child; no, our consanguinity will only quicken my perception, he will be *every thing* to me, or *nothing*."

"Depend upon it, my dear patroness, you will find this darling son, whom fame reports to be so high gifted, answer your most sanguine expectations."

"I wish you may be a true prophetess. I find the duke is desirous that I should reside with him; I have many and forcible reasons against complying with this request: Determined through the remainder of my life to be mistress of myself and actions, I must have a house and servants of my own. Those eccentricities, which from *long habit* are become a part of myself, are now indispensably necessary to my health and comfort; though I am conscious they would make me a a disagreeable inmate of another person's habitation: besides, in Grosvenor-square, I might be fated to meet my *caro sposo*, should the hopes of a dukedom have power to induce him

him to emerge from the ſmoke of his laboratory, and the cobwebs of his muſeum. Such a recontre, though it would not derange my *nervous ſyſtem*, would be, I allow, rather diſagreeable.

" I therefore mean to write to Mr. Davis, and requeſt him, to procure me a furniſhed houſe directly, as much out of the buſtle as poſſible, that my horſes and myſelf may be enabled to ſnuff up, as large a portion of air, as is allotted to inflate the lungs of either biped or quadruped, condemned to wheeze in the denſe atmoſphere of London. I do not mean, though I reject the dukes offer of his houſe, that it ſhall detain me a moment from ſeeing him, for I ſhall ſet off to-morrow morning, and go to the Royal Hotel in Pall-Mall, where we ſhall be well accommodated, till Davis ſettles my eſtabliſhment."

" But will not his Grace behurt at your ladyſhip's refuſing to be his gueſt?"

" Not at all child; he knows enough of my character to be aſſured, I am not guided by either pride or pique, in my preſent determination;

termination; convinced my oddities are harmleſs, he will reſpect them, and leave me to be happy in my own *way*. But, perhaps, Ellinor, to-morrow will be too ſoon to get ready your paraphernalia?"

"By no means, I ſhall attend your ladyſhip with much pleaſure."

She then retired to make what preparations ſhe thought neceſſary for her journey; while Lady John paid a viſit to her ſtable, to give her perſonal orders about her four-footed favourites. Brown Beſs was to follow her by eaſy ſtages; ſhe regretted much loſing the courſing ſeaſon, which promiſed fine ſport to the lovers of that diverſion; while ſhe was condemned to paſs her time in a ſmoky metropolis. She ſent to Sir Harry, requeſted him to give her hounds a breathing, and have an eye to her ſtud, while ſhe was obliged to merely exiſt in London.

Ellinor, though well pleaſed to re-viſit the capital, felt a melancholy *pre-ſentiment*, that ſorrow

ſorrow and diſappointment awaited her there. She recollected from the time ſhe had quitted the convent to the preſent moment, the deceitful calm of a few weeks had been ever quickly ſucceeded by ſtorms and tempeſts, which had driven her on the quickſands of deceit, and expoſed her to periſh on the rocks of envy. She was moſt gratefully attached to Lady John, whoſe whole conduct towards her had been marked by the kindeſt attention; but that lady was going to meet her ſon, who would, moſt probably, be much at her houſe.

Could it be proper, loaded with unjuſt aſperſions as Ellinor already felt ſhe was, to reſide under the ſame roof with a gay young nobleman? would it not call forth all the latent malice of her enemies? ſhe therefore looked forward to the being obliged to quit her preſent happy ſituation, as an event that muſt inevitably happen; ſhe determined in that caſe to attempt being independant of every thing but what the exertions of her talents could procure, which ſhe thought, with thoſe ſanguine ideas ſo natural

natural to her ſeaſon of life, might be eaſily accompliſhed in a luxurious metropolis, where the elegant arts are preferred to the uſeful. In an age where ſhewy acquirements are admired, while the man of profound erudition, philoſophy, and learning, is voted a *bore*; ſhe called to her recollection, how often ſhe had heard Sir James Lavington aſſert, that had Addiſon, Congreve, Prior, lived in the preſent time, their ſenſe, wit, and judgment, would not have been rewarded with penſion, place, or patronage.

As Ellinor aſpired not to mental pre-eminence, and only ſought a mediocrity of fame and profit, ſhe dared to flatter herſelf with the hopes of ſucceſs; therefore driving deſpondency from her mind—truſting to her own powers for her future exiſtence—for ſhe felt "Nature is frugal, and her wants are few;" theſe, ſhe thought, the willing labourer might at any time gratify; ſhe was yet to learn how difficult it was, for a lovely young woman, unknown and unprotected, to ſup-

port

port herſelf by the efforts of her genius without a *name* to give them celebrity. Was ſhe to attempt the preſs, ſhe would have to combat ignorance and prejudice; it would little avail her if her characters were well delineated, her diction elegant, her wit pointed, her morality impreſſive; all theſe would be uſeleſs, unleſs recommended to the world's notice through right honourable patronage; or puffed into fame by ſome faſhionable critic. For lack of theſe neceſſary auxiliaries, modeſt merit pines in a garret, ſtarves in a priſon; or, like Chatterton, depreſſed by miſery, inſulted by lettered arrogance, goaded on by cold neglect, he deſperately leaps that gulph, which ſeparates time from eternity.

But as all this was not known to our heroine, even in theory, ſhe had ſoothed her perturbed imagination, into a calm relative to the future, by having convinced herſelf that an active exertion of thoſe talents with which ſhe was gifted, muſt inſure to her the means of exiſtence. Therefore, in full confidence

fidence of the goodneſs of that Being who forſakes not his creatures, ſhe laid her head on her pillow, and waked not till the entrance of Bloſſom, whoſe ſlumbers had been diſturbed by picturing ſcenes of joy and gladneſs, that ſhe promiſed herſelf in ſeeing London and all its raree-ſhows.

Ellinor found that Lady John had been up and dreſſed an hour, that the carriages were at the door, and they only waited for her: with the aſſiſtance of this elated Abigail, ſhe was ſoon enabled to join her ladyſhip, when they immediately ſet off for the great city. They arrived the ſame evening in health and ſafety, not having met with any hair-breadth eſcapes from perils by land or water; no, not even an overturn in a ditch, that might have enabled ſome courteous knight, who is always ready to make his appearance on ſuch occaſions, to have offered his aſſiſtance; and who of courſe muſt have loſt his heart by a glance either from the bright eyes of Lady John, or the dimpled ſmiles

of

of Ellinor, which, if he happened to be a diſciple of the new ſchool, would fall a ſacrifice to the full blown charms of her ladyſhip; for it is only the Southernwoods of the preſent day, that feel the faſcinations of budding beauties. We grieve that the miſadventures which are ſo conſtantly occurring to the heroines of contemporary noveliſts, did not happen to ours, that we might have been enabled to oblige our young readers with a chapter of the marvellous.

CHAP. VI.

ON the arrival of our travellers in Pall-mall, they found Mr. Davis in waiting, who informed Lady John, that the duke ſtill lingered between life and death; that his grace had received letters from his nephew, whom he hourly expected to ſee; that he had procured for her ladyſhip a houſe in Park-lane, which was ready for her immediate reception. She thanked him for his attention, ſaid ſhe ſhould ſleep where ſhe was for that night, and take poſſeſſion of her habitation the next day; deſired that the duke might be made acquainted with her arrival, having loſt no time in complying with his requeſt to ſee her; and that ſhe ſhould make him a viſit in the morning.

At

At noon the following day, by the early riſing and activity of Lady John, they were quietly ſettled in Park-lane; where leaving Ellinor, ſhe proceeded to Groſvenor-ſquare, to make her promiſed viſit to the duke, and meet her ſon, whom ſhe ſuppoſed muſt be by that time arrived. The carriage had but juſt drove from the door, and Ellinor was ſtanding at a window that overlooked the park, amuſing herſelf with the moving picture it preſented to her view, of equeſtrians, pedeſtrians, and gay equipages; when the door of the room was flung open, and ſhe heard a man's voice ſay, I will wait here for your lady; ſhe turned and beheld a gentleman, who, ſtarting, ſaid, "I beg your pardon, Madam, for this intruſion, but a ſervant ſhewed me into this room, to wait till Lady John's return.

Ellinor, who knew directly it was Mr. Dareall, from his ſtriking reſemblance to her friend, begged him to be ſeated; ſaid, that "her ladyſhip was gone to the Duke of Dreadnought's,

Dreadnought's, but ſhe would immediately ſend a ſervant to her, for which purpoſe ſhe was leaving the room, when he, gallantly leading her to a chair, ſaid, "pray do not rob me of the pleaſure of your company, ſince my good fortune has fated, that the firſt of my fair countrywomen that has met my eyes, on my return to my native land, ſhould be the moſt beauteous of her lovely ſex. Allow me then to admire and wonder."

While he thus addreſſed this ſpeech to Ellinor, whoſe face was covered with bluſhes, and whoſe eyes fell under the ardent regards of his that were fixed on her. She was mortified at the ridiculous figure ſhe felt conſcious of making, before this lively traveller, as ſhe ſtood ſilent and abaſhed. In vain ſhe ſtruggled for her uſual eaſe and prompt reply; confounded at the freedom with which he had addreſſed her, ſhe ſtammered out a few ſentences prefectly incoherent to Mr. Dareall, who appeared to enjoy her confuſion; he continued gazing on her lovely face, as if waiting

waiting for what ſhe was about to addreſs to him, while his glances appeared to have the faſcinating power over her faculties, that is ſaid to be poſſeſſed by a rattle ſnake over thoſe of a humming bird. He had taken her paſſive hand and led her to a chair, when he was juſt about to renew his fine ſpeeches, the door was thrown open, and Lady John flew into his arms, ſaying, "welcome to me and old England, my dear John."

"Thanks, a thouſand thanks, my beloved mother!" throwing himſelf on his knees, "receive the dutiful affection of a ſon, whoſe early years have been cruelly eſtranged from the maternal benediction of a parent, whom it will be his higheſt pride and future ſtudy, to love and honour. Freed, deareſt madam, from thoſe trammels and reſtraints, which were impoſed on my boyiſh actions; arrived at years to think and act for myſelf, the firſt uſe I am inclined to make of my freedom, is to dedicate my time and attention to that dear mother, from the pleaſure of whoſe ſociety I have been ſo long debarred,

who has hitherto had in me only a nominal child."

While he uttered this ſentence, in thoſe impreſſive tones with which nature had ſo liberally gifted him, that vibrated directly to the heart of his auditors; and with feelings that were legibly expreſſed in his animated countenance; kneeling at the feet of his mother, and devouring her hand with kiſſes; his fine eyes fixed on her intereſting face, made irreſiſtible claims on her affection; as the manly drops trembled for a minute on his long dark eye laſhes, till forcing their cryſtal boundaries, they courſed each other down his burning cheeks; while thoſe of his happy parent ſtreamed with delight as ſhe preſſed him to her maternal boſom in an ecſtaſy of joy, to which, till the preſent moment, it had been a ſtranger.

"Oh, my dear boy, your profeſſions of love and duty, if ſincere, (and I will not allow myſelf to believe them otherwiſe) have given

given me pleaſure bordering on agony. Be aſſured you poſſeſs my moſt ardent affections. At this intereſting moment, I feel my breaſt expand with new ſenſations; I rejoice in being a mother, and am proud of my ſon." Saying this, ſhe again embraced him, her expreſſive looks portrayed the exultation of her heart, as ſhe viewed his fine form, in which were united manly ſtrength and graceful beauty.

"Ah, my dear John, may the divine architect that formed the plaſtic clay with ſo much care, but have endued the mind it contains with equal excellence; how then, ſhall I exult like the mother of the Gracchi, in having given my country a citizen, that will live and die in the cauſe of freedom? my dear boy, never by your future conduct cruſh my high raiſed expectations, for I cannot ſay what might be the conſequence to a mind vivid as mine, if fated to experience a diſappointment in its fondeſt hopes."

"Fear me not, deareſt mother, if I have in my compoſition a ſpark of your independ-

dent ſpirit, I ſhall ever act according to your moſt ſanguine wiſhes."

"I rejoice to hear your aſſertions; you are the laſt branch of two families, whoſe fortunes and honours centre in your perſon; from your father's you will inherit noble blood, titles, and conſequence; from *mine*, untarniſhed honour, unſhaken honeſty, independent firmneſs. It is on record, that not one of my anceſtors ever were ſwayed by ambition, to give a vote againſt his conſcience: ſlaves to no party, they loved their country; to ſupport her laws and freedom; was their only end and aim; for this they gave their weight to the miniſter when they thought he was actuated in his proceedings for the honour of his king and the good of his country. On the contrary, wary obſervers of his political conduct, jealous of every innovation attempted on the rights, priviledges, and immunities, of free born Britons; if they perceived a wily ſtateſman, by ſpecious arts and ſeductive eloquence, attempting to ſap the ſtructure raiſed at the expence

expence of their blood, and ſupported by the energies of our brave forefathers; then did your progenitors, independent in their principles as fortune, fold themſelves in the robe of integrity, ſtep forth and arraign his conduct, in the bold, blunt, though impreſſive language, dictated by an honeſt heart, and a firm mind. May the ſame generous impulſe by which they were actuated, be the rule of your actions.

"I have but a few words to add; let honour, truth, and juſtice, be your guides, and then, though you may be tempted by the warmth and improvidence of youth to turn aſide from the ſtrict paths of propriety, to wander for a time on the flowery mazes of pleaſure; reflection will ſoon bring you back to the right road, and induce you to ſeek your original companions; whoſe value, abſence will then have taught you properly to appreciate. While your boſom harbours ſuch inmates, you will not find me a ſevere monitreſs of the follies and eccentricities natural to your period of life. I have

many of both to condemn in myſelf, without being able to plead the ſame excuſe. I am conſcious there is much in my behaviour that needs the kindneſs of relatives and the partiality of friends to extenuate. Avoid the meanneſs of duplicity; ſink not into the depravity of vice, where after having gone a certain length, every effort you make to extricate yourſelf from her trammels, will but plunge you deeper.

"I doubt, my dear John, this lecture will frighten you from your mother, who you will think a ſnarling cynical old woman; but depend upon it, you will not find her ſo, but ever kind and indulgent. I felt all I have ſaid, when I beheld you: long uſed to expreſs my ſenſations as they aroſe, I therefore gave them utterance, convinced, that when your affections were rouſed for a mother, from whom you had been ſo long eſtranged, that was the moment her ſentiments and advice were moſt likely to make a favourable impreſſion, fraught as your heart then was with filial tenderneſs."

Mr. Dareall

Mr. Dareall thanked her for her ſenſible admonitions, declared that every word ſhe uttered, had ſunk deep into his heart, from whence it ſhould never be eraſed, but held as a ſacred depoſit, to which he would recur when about to act, that he might be enabled to become all ſhe wiſhed; for his conſtant ſtudy ſhould be, how to render himſelf worthy of ſuch a parent.

Lady John now, for the firſt time, thought of Ellinor; who ſhe had a vague idea of of having ſeen in the room, at her entrance; but all other objects had been overlooked, in the rapturous joy of embracing a ſon, whoſe appearance promiſed that he would be all ſhe wiſhed. Mr. Dareall had likewiſe been much ſtruck with our heroine, though he had not ſeen her depart; which ſhe had done directly upon Lady John's running into the arms of her ſon.

Ellinor felt rejoiced to eſcape from the humiliating *mauvaise honte*, which had to her

her aſtoniſhment, chained up her faculties in the company of Mr. Dareall; conſcious that activity was the beſt cure for *ennui*, ſhe exerted herſelf, and began unpacking her works of taſte, arranged her drawings, ſet up her embroidery frame, ſorted her muſic againſt the arrival of her harp, preparing every thing for thoſe avocations to which ſhe dedicated the hours that were not paſſed with her benefactreſs.

In deſpite of all theſe exertions, her mind reverted to the dangerous and faſcinating Mr. Dareall; whoſe handſome figure, claſped in the arms of his mother, while the luxurious tears of joy gliſtened in their eyes, active fancy would obtrude upon her mental viſion. She wiſhed to be properly introduced to him, by Lady John; that ſhe might have an opportunity to do away the impreſſion, that ſhe thought her childiſh conduct muſt have made on his ideas; ſhe felt reſtleſs and uneaſy, ſat down to her toilet, dreſſed for dinner; ſhe then took up a book; it was a volume of her favourite Pope. It opened

at

the Elegy on the Death of an unfortunate Lady. Her eyes involuntarily filled with tears as ſhe read,

" By foreign hands, thy dying eyes were clos'd,
" By foreign hands, thy decent limbs compos'd,
" By foreign hands, thy humble grave adorn'd,
" By ſtrangers honour'd, and by ſtrangers mourn'd."

" Ah! ſuch moſt probably will be my fate; no kind relative to ſmooth my ſick pillow, whiſper preſent comfort, or point out future hope."

At this moment, Lady John entered, ſaying, " my dear Ellinor, I am all joy and gladneſs;"—when, ſtarting, ſhe exclaimed, " what 's the matter now? come, no tears;—don't cloud my preſent felicity, of which I came to make you a partaker, by letting me ſee that you are unhappy. Let me introduce you to my dear boy; who is, ſetting aſide the partiality of a mother for her own brat, a moſt glorious handſome fellow. I therefore warn you, to take care of your heart

heart; unleſs it be really made of impenetrable ſtuff, it muſt be ſoftened by the bright eyes of John Dareall. But you have ſeen him; I recollect I found you, *tête à-tête*; how does the little flutterer beat? with its uſual coldneſs," here ſhe preſſed her hand on Ellinor's ſide, "no, on my life it palpitates briſkly!"

All the time Lady John, who was in exuberant ſpirits, was thus rallying Ellinor, ſhe felt the tremors of the morning return with redoubled force; the blood ſeemed to forſake her boſom, and ruſh to her face and neck, which were covered with a burning ſuffuſion. This being obſerved by Lady John, ſhe ſaid, "I beg your pardon, my dear girl, for plaguing you thus; but I know you will excuſe me, for I am at this moment too happy to be wiſe." Then taking her paſſive hand, ſhe led her to the drawing room, her eyes yet moiſt with tears, and her lovely face glowing with bluſhes. A more interreſting figure could not be conceived

by the moſt poetic imagination, than was now preſented in the form of Ellinor, to the ardent glances of Mr. Dareall, as his mother led her to him, ſaying "Dear John, give me leave to introduce to you, my young favourite, Miſs Harcourt, and to claim for her a place in your friendſhip, I know ſhe will not refuſe to beſtow hers on the ſon of her friend." As ſhe ſaid this, ſhe threw an arch glance on both, and added, "hear me, young man, you muſt not aſpire to her heart, that was formed from the coldeſt icicle that hung on Dian's temple. She has already condemned to death and deſperation, by her frozen diſdain, dukes, lords, baronets, right honourables, and ſimple gentlemen, out of number.

"Remember, I warn you of the danger of her Circean faſcinations; ſo daſh the cup from you ere it touches your lips; leſt by taſting, you take ſome fantaſtic form, and are turned out to graze with the herd, who have ſwallowed the enchanting beverage before you."

"I thank

"I thank your ladyſhip for this caution; but a man of courage is not to be deterred by the fate of his comrades, from attempting to carry a poſt of danger; the greater the enterpriſe, the more glorious the conqueſt. Death or victory ſhall be the motto on my ſhield:" here gallantly kneeling, and kiſſing Ellinor's hand, he ſaid, "from this moment I vow myſelf your true and loyal knight, to proclaim your peerleſs beauty to the whole world, fight in defence of your honour, and die at your feet, unleſs you bid me riſe."

Ellinor, who had been making every effort to recover herſelf, ſaid, "riſe now then, but ſmall will be the celebrity you would gain by wearing my colours, and becoming my champion; for in deſpite of the pompous ſtring of admirers, that Lady John's wicked wit has made you believe you would have to combat, you will not meet with one, that will take up your gauntlet, run a tilt, or break a lance to prove my ſovereign power."

"Thanks,

"Thanks, moſt courteous lady, but ere I quit my ſuppliant poſture, I ought to requeſt your pardon, for my familiar addreſs, when I preſumed to introduce myſelf to your preſence unannounced, ſome two hours ſince. But as a candid confeſſion will beſt plead for me, before ſuch judges, I muſt acknowledge, (knowing my mother's averſion to female companions) I was ſtruck with the charms of what I thought her handmaid; I therefore expreſſed my admiration of them, in terms, that powerful as were their influence, I dared not have done, had I known that the goddeſs of my idolatry was Miſs Harcourt."

After they had lauged at his miſtake, the eaſe and vivacity of all the parties ſoon reconciled them to each other. Before they deſcended to the dinner parlour, Ellinor's reſerve was baniſhed, and her lively wit and graceful manners ſhone with their wonted luſtre.

CHAP. VII.

MR. Dareall had arrived at his uncle's Houſe in Groſvenor-ſquare, at an early hour in the morning, after having travelled poſt all night, for fear he ſhould be too late to receive the duke's bleſſing, who had ever treated him with the kindeſt love and attention. On finding that the attendants thought him rather better, and that he then ſlept, he retired to the apartment prepared for his accommodation, and went to bed; ordering his valet to acquaint him as ſoon as the duke awaked; deſiring that no perſon might inform Lady John of his arrival, as he wiſhed to be his own meſſenger.

While

While her ladyſhip was taking poſſeſſion of her houſe, Mr. Dareall had an interview with his dying relation; who felt a momentary renovation, as he folded to his boſom the manly form of his nephew, contemplating with delight, the animated beauty of his countenance, that glowed with health. He flattered himſelf, he beheld a repreſentative worthy of the long line of princely anceſtors from whom he ſprung; one who would renew their wonted dignity and ſplendour, which had faded into abſcurity in the ſick chamber of a valetudinarian, and that threatened to be annihilated in the laboratory of a projector.

After Mr. Dareall had ſat with the duke till his phyſicians were announced, he took that opportunity of flying to the arms of his mother; for whom, at the moment he made the profeſſion, he really felt all the love he expreſſed; and ſincerely meant, by his future attentions to repay her, and himſelf, for the many years his father had eſtrang-

eſtranged them from each other. While he came to Park-lane, Lady John had arrived in Groſvenor-ſquare; here ſhe was made acquainted by Davis, of her ſon's return; eager to embrace him, ſhe re-entered her carriage, without waiting to ſee the duke. After dinner Lady John, attended by Mr. Dareall, viſited his uncle.

Ellinor was now left alone, to cogitate on the events of the laſt twenty-four hours; ſhe reflected with pleaſure on the happineſs of her benefactreſs; for to have a child reſtored to her arms, that appeared ſo worthy of her love, muſt be the extreme of joy. Was all but as right within, as it ſhewed fair without, *Gods what a goodly creature!* his form was a temple worthy of the Deity, why then doubt its being conſecrated to honour and rectitude? becauſe there is a degree of levity in his manners, a bold aſſumption in his looks, a ſelf-conſciouſneſs of pre-eminence, that proclaims if he was a lover, he would demand the heart of his miſtreſs as a conqueror, not ſue for it

it as an humble ſuppliant; he would expect to ſay, with Cæſar, *veni, vidi, vici.* Ah! how unlike the modeſt, retiring, reſpectful Howard; worthy creature, why cannot I prove myſelf a fit partner of thy offered fortunes? why not give my heart to the man whom I admire, honour, and eſteem? who has every thing but my *love!* Ah! there 's the rub; with him for my protector, thoſe ſtorms that aſſail me would ſink into gentle zephyrs. Secure from the inſolence of my own ſex, and the libertine purſuits and propoſals, that my poverty expoſes me to bear from men; who avail themſelves of my deſtitute ſituation, to addreſs me with licentious freedom: but would it not be ſelfiſh in the extreme, to yield my hand to Howard, from motives of intereſt? when I cannot give him my *heart* it would make him truly miſerable.

A ſoul like his, ſo tenderly alive, ſo fraught with ſenſibility, that glows with ardent love, could never be ſatisfied and happy with the efforts

efforts of friendſhip, or the placid attentions dictated by eſteem. No, Ellinor, never let deception ſtain your character; once more determine not to accept the worthy Howard, till your conſcience tells you, you can return his affection. Shrink not from the trials that may be yet in ſtore for you. Thus ever ended her ſelf-deliberations, when he was their object.

Lady John returned from her viſit to Groſvenor-Square, with her ſpirits much depreſſed, having had an interview with the Duke, who had been moſt earneſtly urging her to be reconciled to Lord John, as it would prevent, in future, that diviſion of intereſt, and difference of opinion, that had hitherto rendered her ſon's life uncomfortable, and, doubtleſs, her own unhappy. He requeſted that ſhe would reflect on the miſery of thoſe families, where either vice or caprice had occaſioned a ſeparation between the huſband and wife. How much conſequence the children of ſuch parents loſt, on their entrance

entrance into life, by the neglect of the world, that ever fixes a doubtful ſtigma on their deſcendants, who, in loſing the protections of a mother, generally forfeit the affections of a father.

Such are human paſſions, that a part of the reſentment which is felt againſt the wife, on theſe occaſions, too often adheres to her innocent offspring. He added, "this caſe, my dear ſiſter, is not directly in point with you, I know my brother's purſuits, and your's, were ſo oppoſite in early life, that they precluded domeſtic felicity; it was therefore the wiſh of your mutual friends, that you ſhould *part*. Your excellent underſtanding, now matured by judgment, will convince you of the great pleaſure your ſon will receive in witneſſing the unanimity of thoſe to who he owes his exiſtence."

"I would do much, my dear brother, to gratify your wiſhes, and add to his happineſs, could I conceive that your preſent propoſals would anſwer that purpoſe."

"I rejoice to find you inclined to meet my ideas; your returning to live with his father, will be of real utility to my nephew, when he is about to eſtabliſh himſelf in marriage, which I hope he will ſoon do, with a young lady his equal in rank, fortune, and years. An attention to theſe requiſites can alone inſure his felicity. Ill aſſorted matches ever bring in their train, diſguſt, diſappointment, and repentance.

"John is the laſt branch of our houſe. I have lived many years, a martyr to the exceſſes of youthful libertiniſm, miſapplied talents, and health deſtroyed by vicious purſuits. Had I married early, I might now have been well and happy, ſurrounded by a ſmiling progeny." Here, preſſing his nephew's hand, he ſaid, "my beloved boy, attend to my dying injunctions; let me earneſtly recommend you, to avoid my follies, as you dread their puniſhment. Think ſeriouſly of my advice in your choice of a wife; as ſoon as you have made a proper election, marry, and become a good huſband, and

and an affectionate father. So may God bleſs and proſper you, as you fufill theſe *firſt* of duties."

The duke had exhauſted himſelf by this long converſation, which coſt him a great effort; but as his heart was ſet on theſe two objects, the recommending to Lady John a reconciliation with her huſband, and to his nephew an early marriage, he appeared by theſe exertions to have gained in happineſs what he loſt in ſtrength.

Lady John promiſed him, ſhe would give what he had ſaid on the ſubject of her re-union with his brother, the moſt ſerious conſideration; and having taken counſel of her pillow, ſhe would ſee him the next morning, and acquaint him with the reſult of her determinations. Mr. Dareall, a courtier from inſtinct, readily promiſed a compliance with all his uncle's injunctions; ambition being the leading trait in his character, this coſt him no effort.

As ſoon as Lady John was ſeated by the ſide of her friend Ellinor, ſhe recounted the converſation that had paſſed between the duke, herſelf, and ſon; ſaid, that "his grace's arguments had ſtaggered her reſolves, as he had pointed out the benefit her being reconciled to Lord John, would be to Dareall." She added, "I am conſcious, if I conſent once more to be an inhabitant of his houſe, I muſt bid adieu to thoſe actions of free will, that diſpoſal of my time, that choice of my friends, which, to a mind like mine, forms its higheſt felicity. I muſt quit heaven-born liberty for courtly ſlavery, and yield to the tyrannic deſpotiſm of that man, whoſe intellectual weakneſs I ſhall ever deſpiſe. But it would be a ſacrifice worthy myſelf; for if I make it, moſt aſſuredly I ſhall renounce for the good of others, what conſtitutes my chief happineſs."

"Then you *will* make it moſt undoubtedly, my noble-minded Lady John; for when did you let a ſelfiſh conſideration preclude you from contributing to the enjoyment of your friends?"

I do

"I do not positively say that; but I will revolve it in my mind, and give the question fair play; if the result should prove the duke's arguments to be right, I flatter myself I have strength of mind sufficient to act accordingly.

"Come, Ellinor, let us call a more agreeable subject; what think you of my boy, is he not a charming fellow? he has a soul of fire, high blooded, with strong animal spirits. Youthful beauty mantles on his cheek—rude health braces his fine formed limbs. Such a being will have innumerable temptations, thrown in the way of his path through life, that will require more than mortal forbearance to withstand. Possessed of such numerous requisites with which bounteous nature has so liberally endowed him; improved by a polished education—supported by princely rank, and a splendid fortune—left as he will be at the duke's death, his own master at the age of twenty-two—it is an equal chance whether he uses his talents for the good of his fellow creatures,

or perverts thoſe advantages I have enumerated, for their deſtruction."

"I hope my amiable benefactreſs will ever find her happineſs ariſe from this dear ſon, ſo highly gifted by nature and fortune."

"I don't know that, Ellinor; ſuch a character as John Dareall's can know no cold medium; it will be great, or depraved; it will be loved, or feared. I have already explained my ſentiments, and what I expect; I ſhall not therefore torment him by repeating them, nor make my ſon an alien from my arms, by ſtringing proverbs and old ſaws whenever we meet. No, I ſhall leave his inclinations to take their own bent, though I mean to be a cloſe obſerver of his conduct, and I hope an impartial judge of his actions.

"I give thus candidly my opinion of Dareall, becauſe in the nature of your ſituations, you muſt be frequently together. I could not, for my own daughter, conſent to act the degrading part of a duenna, and be always wary, doubting, and watching;

watching; you muſt therefore guard yourſelf; you are a lovely young woman of eighteen, he is a handſome fellow of two and twenty. It is juſt the age of faſcination; his eyes *proclaim* the ſuſceptibility of his heart; your ſparklers *whiſper* that your's is not compoſed of adamant, though hitherto it has proved invulnerable to the attacks of your adorers. Truſt not to your own ſtrength; we women are often ruined by too much ſelf confidence.

"Rejected lovers tell us, the hour of retribution will come; I am afraid there is too much truth in their auguries. May your's, my dear Ellinor, never arrive, till the object that creates an intereſt in your heart, feels a reciprocal paſſion; then may you in a happy union experience that felicity which you truly merit. I have warned you of what I feared might be dangerous to your future peace, becauſe I thought it my duty. Perhaps you will only laugh at my fears, and place them to the partial opinion of a mother,

who eſtimates her ſon's *agrémens*, much beyond their intrinſic value."

"Not at all, my dear Lady John, I allow that your deſcription of Mr. Dareall is not exaggerated by the vivid pencil of a mother's love; for the conſequences of thoſe charms to me that you prognoſticate, you make me tremble. That paſſion, which is ſaid to form the felicity of mortals, would complete the miſery of my eventful life. Let me then fly that laſt and moſt dreaded evil, which Pandora's box has yet in *reſerve* for your poor Ellinor; if my body muſt be ever doomed to a ſtate of dependence, let my heart be free. Give me then leave to quit your hoſpitable roof, before I may be tempted to entertain a paſſion, that muſt inevitably forfeit your friendſhip, and render me deſpicable in my own eſteem, by making me ungrateful to the kindeſt benefactreſs."

"Ellinor, you take up this matter too ſeriouſly; do not ſhrink from an imaginary evil; my affection for you induced me to put you on your guard againſt Dareall, who,

we

we both agree is an object calculated to excite admiration; whether he is likely to uſe his powers honourably, or diſhonourably, is yet to be aſcertained. I obſerved when his uncle pointed out the motives that he wiſhed to guide his choice of a wife, in which the old *leaven* of family pride, and ambition, was the leading feature, it appeared to meet Dareall's own ideas, and received his cheerful approbation.

"From that moment, I reſolved before I ſlept to ſpeak to you on the ſubject. I have now done ſo; your own good ſenſe will teach you how to conduct yourſelf with prudence and propriety. I know I can truſt to the rectitude of your heart, and will not hear of your leaving me; ſo think no more of it. The object of contention will reſide in Groſvenor-ſquare, while his uncle lives; after his death, the houſe becomes his own, and an eſtate in Yorkſhire, that the duke purchaſed ſome time ſince, which he has bequeathed to him, with all his ready money, making him the poſſeſſor of an immenſe property; as his

uncle's long illneſs, and total ſecluſion from the world, enabled him to lay by the greateſt part of the produce of the family eſtate, which is a clear £30,000 a year; which will deſcend, with the title, to Lord John; and in the chain of events muſt, at ſome future period, devolve to my ſon."

Lady John and Ellinor ſoon after retired to their reſpective apartments, where the latter, little inclined to ſleep, thoughtfully meditated on the converſation of the evening, which, ſhe was convinced, was begun by Lady John for the beſt of purpoſes, to alarm her vigilance, and put her on her guard againſt the dangerous blandiſhments of Mr. Dareall; that, in caſe he ſhould be tempted to call them forth to enſnare her affections, ſhe might ſee there were but ſmall hopes that a man ſo inclined, to ſacrifice to ambition, would offer her honourable propoſals, even ſhould her perſon make an impreſſion on his heart. She felt the utmoſt gratitude for the kind intentions of her friendly

friendly monitreſs, though her pride was ſeverely hurt, that her ladyſhip ſhould think her weak enough to need her admonitions. She could excuſe the partiality of a mother for ſuppoſing her ſon to be irriſiſtible; but ſurely, to an impartial ſpectator, he was not an object of ſuch tremendous conſequence! At all events, ſhe came to the reſolution of not quitting her ladyſhip's protection immediately, for it would be a confirmation of her *preſentiments*, and ſhould he gueſs the cauſe, give a proud triumph to glut the vanity of Mr. Dareall. This determined her to continue Lady John's viſitor long enough, to convince her, that friendſhip and eſteem, were the only ſentiments ſhe would ever feel for him.

Ellinor having made this prudent reſolve went to bed, where ſhe experienced perturbed and reſtleſs ſlumbers, occaſioned by the image of the object that had employed her waking thoughts, the all-conquering Dareall. In the viſions that flitted before her eyes, ſhe

ſaw him at her feet, offering all the joys of love and fortune to her acceptance; juſt as ſhe was about to give him her hand, he vaniſhed from her ſight: the fright awaked her; again ſhe turned to court gentle ſleep, again Dareall appeared before her, ſhe wandered with him through ſhady groves, and flower beſprinkled valleys; when he led her to the brink of a yawning gulph, which he was about to force her down, in deſpite of her ſcreams and ſtruggles; Howard then appeared on the oppoſite ſide, and by frenzied actions evinced his deſpair that he could not paſs the chaſm, to ſave her from violence and inſult. Juſt as ſhe gave herſelf up for loſt, ſhe was ſuddenly tranſported to the other ſide, by a beautiful woman, who preſented her to Sir James Lavington; he embraced and preſſed her to his heart with much tenderneſs, gave her hand to Howard, whoſe joy at receiving it was exceſſive; but ere ſhe could aſk an explanation of this myſtery, Bloſſom came to awake her; but the dream had made a ſtrong impreſſion on her

fancy,

fancy, which was now buſy in explaining the enigma.

On her entering the breakfaſt room, ſhe found Lady John, whoſe fine countenance was clouded by a thoughtful melancholy; neither of them ſeemed inclined to talk, and this meal paſſed in almoſt total ſilence, till Mr. Dareall was announced, who came to attend his mother to the duke's, who had expreſſed great impatience to ſee her.

Ellinor ſoon after his entrance quitted the room, and retired to the one appropriated to her uſe; where ſhe tried to amuſe her mind by ſketching a view of the Park from the window; but ſhe could not pleaſe herſelf, it would not do, the paper was not fit for uſe, the pencils were good for nothing! though they were the very ſame materials that had enabled her to gain ſo much *eclat* by ſome beautiful drawings done in Hampſhire. She therefore flung them into her *port-feuille*, and took up a book; while her eyes

eyes wandered over the pages, her mind did not retain one word of the ſubject; ſhe laid it down, convinced ſhe was at that moment too *diſtrait* to enter into the merits of its author.

Determined on employment, ſhe made *one* more effort; ſhe ſat down to her frame, where ſhe was embroidering a ſkreen for Lady John; here ſhe had no better ſucceſs, inattentive to her colours, ſhe made lilies purple, and moſs roſes blue. She was arouſed from this mental ſtupor by Bloſſom, to the ſenſe of the error ſhe had committed, who came to inform her that Lady John had ſent home the carriage, and deſired ſhe would go out and take an airing in the Park for an hour, and then call for her in Groſvenor-ſquare. Ellinor was moſt happy at receiving the ſummons, conſcious ſhe could find no amuſement within doors, ſhe rejoiced at an opportunity of ſeeking it abroad.

While Bloſſom was putting on Ellinor's cloak,

cloak, her eyes fell on the frame, when ſhe exclaimed "Lord, Miſs, theſe here flowers would be very natural, if you had but made your lilies white, and your roſes red."

"Why, are they not ſo, Bloſſom?"

"No, Miſs Ellinor, they be purple and blue, if my eyes do ſee clear."

Ellinor now looked at the work, and bluſhed at the miſtake ſhe had made, while the girl, giggling, ſaid "what could you be thinking of, Miſs? if I had done ſo, Mr. John would have ſaid I was in *love*, for he ſays it *balways* ſets one beſides one's ſelf."

At this ſimple ſpeech, Ellinor felt the glow increaſe on her cheek, while ſhe buſied herſelf in covering over the occaſion of it, that ſhe might be liable to no more animadverſions on the miſtakes of the morning.

CHAP. VIII.

ELLINOR having taken her place in the carriage, bade the coachman drive round the unfrequented part of Hyde-Park, that ſhe might uninterruptedly take herſelf to taſk for the ſtrange humour and reſtleſſneſs which had poſſeſſed her ſince ſhe returned to London. She felt conſcious of the events, but could not account for the cauſes; though we are convinced they have for ſome time ceaſed to be problematical to our readers, from ſixteen to ſixty. Nothing is ſo eaſy as to ſhun the conviction of errours, which we are predetermined not to allow ourſelves capable of committing. In this ſituation did our heroine find herſelf, ſtaggered by doubts,

and

and ſhunning *certainty*; when ſhe was arouſed from her profound reverie by a gentleman riding up to the carriage, who thus addreſſed her.

"How happy I am dear Miſs Harcourt, to greet your reſtoration once more to the regions of faſhion, the emporium of freedom. I rejoice to ſee you emerged from dirty dog kennels and ſtinking ſtables; the world of *ton* will congratulate themſelves upon your emancipation; ſo bright a conſtellation, whoſe effulgent rays need but to be aſſigned their proper ſphere to claim a proud pre-eminence in the galaxy of Britiſh beauties. You muſt, you will, allow me, to be the Herſchell to fix the proper ſtation of that effulgent ſtar, the Ellinor Sidus."

At this inflated rhapſody, uttered with his accuſtomed velocity by her *ci-devant* admirer, the duke of Southernwood, Ellinor could not help laughing; but thinking irony was a better weapon than anger, to oppoſe this

this antiquated adorer, as he rode by the ſide of the carriage, ſhe turned the whole edge of her wit againſt him, burleſqued his love, ridiculed his compliments, and treated his complaints with contempt, that by the time the chariot and his poney, had got the length of the faſhionable ride, he was fairly beat out of all his ſtrong holds; and appeared both mortified and creſt fallen. He made ſeveral futile attempts to rally his forces, but his opponent ſaw, and kept her advantage.

At the very moment that like a Roman conqueror, ſhe was about to enter the capital, dragging her captive at her chariot wheels, ſhe met a check to her triumph. Colonel Campley, riding up at the oppoſite ſide to the duke, congratulated her on her return to London, with the moſt perfect *nonchalance*, and that unbluſhing effrontery, that but too frequently marks the high bred man of faſhion.

He

He appeared to enjoy the evident tremour his unexpected appearance occaſioned her, who had with ſo much caution avoided a *recontre* with him, ever ſince the adventure in the ſummer-houſe; that muſt irremediably have ruined her future proſpects in life, had not Lady John been a woman of ten thouſand. Ellinor tried to conceal her terrour at his ſight, by throwing into her expreſſive features, all the ſcorn, anger, and contempt ſhe felt for this implacable enemy to her fame and fortune.

Campley deprecated her wrath, and rallied her diſdain; with his accuſtomed aſſurance, talked of the adventure at Morton Abbey, called it a Maſquerade frolic, a mere *badinage*; deſired the duke to ſay, if he did not think he ought to claim a reward from Miſs Harcourt, inſtead of being ſtill expoſed to her reſentment.

"Deteſtable wretch."

"For what, charming Ellinor? for giving you an excuſe to quit the den of the giant deſpair—to taſte the joys of freedom, under the

the auſpices of Lady John Dareall, an avowed diſciple of nature, who has never ſubmitted to the trammels of reſtraint; whoſe creed is, to act, think, and ſpeak, from the propelling paſſion of the moment; with *such* a preceptreſs how expanded and liberal muſt be the mind of her pupil."

This was ſpoken by her tormentor in the moſt provoking tones of irony; while the depreſſed duke, renovated by ſo powerful an auxiliary, evidently enjoyed the mortification that Campley had contrived to transfer from him to his fair antagoniſt. Ellinor, whoſe breaſt was the ſeat of contending paſſions, exerted herſelf to ſtifle thoſe emotions which ſtruggled to relieve themſelves by tears; but ſhe determined not to give ſuch a triumph to her perſecutors; when, addreſſing Campley, ſhe ſaid:

"After the wrongs and inſults I have ſuffered from you, Sir, in Hampſhire, I ought not to be ſurpriſed at the effrontery of your preſent

preſent behaviour; robbed of friends and fame by your artful deceptions; for, conſcious as you were of my innocence, did you not refuſe to do me juſtice? and with moſt unmanly duplicity, allow the whole odium of your own depravity to reſt on me, that my conduct might appear too infamous to merit commiſeration; that, thrown from the protection of thoſe by whom I was loved and foſtered, I might fall an eaſy victim into thoſe ſnares by which you had artfully ſurrounded me. If Lady John Dareall, with a generoſity all her own, had not ſnatched me from the threatened ruin, it would have inevitably happened. For this act of humanity, you level all the ſhafts of your ridicule againſt the moſt worthy of human beings; who is placed too high by rank, fortune, and merit, to be injured by your futile attempts at wit.

"Any man but a Colonel Campley would have ſtudiouſly avoided the ſight of a woman, whom he had perſecuted with ſuch unrelenting cruelty, and who had been the

the innocent victim of his deceptions; but your heart is too callous to feel the ſtings of remorſe, for the miſchief your plotting head has occaſioned. I have therefore only to inſiſt, this may be the laſt time you ever attempt to ſpeak to me."

She now drew up the glaſs of the chariot, and turning to the duke, who ſtill rode on the oppoſite ſide, with his hand upon the the door, liſtening with great pleaſure to the phillippic the gay Colonel had received; ſhe ſaid:

"My Lord, I have hitherto laughed at your abſurd paſſion, and treated it with the contempt it deſerves. I muſt requeſt, unleſs you wiſh a repetition of the ſame behaviour, that you will ceaſe to perſecute me, and render yourſelf ridiculous."

Eliinor now pulling the check ſtring, ordered the coachman to drive as faſt as poſſible to Groſvenor-ſquare, leaving her two

admirers, gazing on each other; the duke ſwearing ſhe was a girl of ſpirit, and he liked her the better for it; the colonel rode away in ſilence, determined that ſhe ſhould be his, *maugre* every obſtacle; for his *perſonal* vanity was ſeverely mortified, that he could not make her in love with him, and his pride was piqued by the *hauteur* ſhe had treated him with. Then, to let his deep laid ſchemes be baffled by a girl, who had to boaſt ſo little worldly knowledge, would be ſuch a blot in the eſcutcheon of his gallantries; that for all theſe good and ſufficient cauſes, he vowed, not to give up the purſuit till it was crowned with victory.

On Ellinor's arrival at the Duke of Dreadnought's, ſhe was ſhewed into a ſuperb drawing room, where ſhe was ſoon joined by Lady John, who was too much engroſſed by her own concerns, to obſerve the trepidation of her friend. "Well, my good girl, thank God, I am ſtill a free denizen; Lord John has declined his brother's interpoſition to reconcile us, on the

the conviction of our purſuits and inclinations being ſo very oppoſite, that a reunion could only contribute to make *both* miſerable; on this ſubject we are perfectly agreed, though I left my houſe this morning determined to lay open my whole heart, and the motives by which it was actuated, to the duke, to convince him, that I was willing to ſacrifice my own comforts, if he thought by doing ſo I could contribute to the pleaſures of either Lord John, or my ſon.

"The duke thanked me for my attention to his advice, ſaid, it had been given with a view to contribute to the mutual happineſs and intereſt of all parties. He made me many compliments on the goodneſs of my heart, and the diſintereſtedneſs of my conduct; regretted that his interpoſition had not met with the ſucceſs he wiſhed, then acquainted me with what I have already informed you, that my *little lord* had refuſed to receive me among his non-deſcripts; for which rejection, ſo far from being as moſt other women in my ſituation would have been, enraged and mortified, I

feel

feel myſelf much obliged; by his declining a reconciliation, I am exonerated from blame, and reſtored to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of free agency, which I will again retire to enjoy, at Bramble Hall, as ſoon as this poor dear duke's fate is determined; for I have given him my word not to leave London, till that event happens.

"Like an expiring lamp, he feels renovated flaſhes of light, that ſoon ſink again into ſombre gloom; this will eventually terminate in *death*, though his phyſicians tell me the vital ſpark may yet continue many weeks to linger on the verge of eternity."

Ellinor having expreſſed her admiration at Lady John's conduct, gave her that praiſe ſhe undoubtedly deſerved, by generouſly offering to forego that freedom which conſtituted her ſole happineſs, to what had been pointed out to her as calculated to promote the good of her ſon. She acquainted her ladyſhip of the diſagreeable rencontre in the park, with the duke and Campley;

the converſation that had paſſed, and her anſwers, which met Lady John's entire approbation, who deſired her not to permit their behaviour to affect her ſpirits, promiſed that ſhe ſhould not again go out alone, for when ſhe could not accompany her, ſhe had a right to command the attendance of her *ſworn knight*, who would protect her from the ſtratagems of thoſe devourers of diſtreſſed damſels, Southernwood, and Campley.

CHAP. VI.

WE will now leave the chamber of ſickneſs, to inhale the renovating breezes of Hampſhire, while we take a retroſpect of thoſe characters we left within the precincts of the royal foreſt.

Lady Fanny, in the few weeks ſhe had been a viſitor at Morton Abbey, had contrived to throw its inhabitants "into much admired diſorder;" ſhe had perſuaded Mrs. Campley, that her huſband had intrigued with Ellinor, before that Lady left London; that they had contrived to carry on their intercourſe in the country, in deſpite of Mrs. Campley's ſuperiour *charms*, that muſt have inſured the admiration of any man but the

ingrate on whom ſhe had unfortunately choſen to beſtow her hand and fortune. Lady Fanny vowed, that ſhe feared had it been her fate to have *her* merits ſo neglected, ſhe ſhould be tempted to rouze this fickle huſband's jealouſy, by flirting with all the pretty fellows of her acquaintance.

To Mrs. Oſwald ſhe recommended the bringing her *beautiful* daughters to London, and no longer attempt to bury them in the ſilence and ſolitude of Morton Abbey, who poſſeſſed attractions, that needed only to be ſeen in the ſphere of faſhion, to be courted and admired. They would then marry men of rank and fortune, and conſequently gain ſplendid eſtabliſhments. If ſhe doomed them to inhabit the old family manſion houſe, and waſte their bloom in retirement, they would either be tempted to run away to Gretna-green, with ſome crop of a curate, country apothecary, or recruiting enſign; or, ſhould they providentially eſcape all theſe *natural* occurrences, they might become helpmates

to

to ſome of the fox hunting *boors*, that infeſt the neighbourhood of the foreſt, who would chuſe them becauſe their fortunes would help to clear the mortgages upon their eſtates; or from their domeſtic education, having fitted them to ſee their table well ſerved, overlook the houſe-keepers, and check the ſteward's accounts. "To avoid realiſing theſe *ſhocking* ideas, my dear Mr. Oſwald, you muſt conſent to bring your daughters to that *mart*, where only their true merit can be appreciated, where conſequence and grandeur will await their acceptance."

The weak head of poor Mrs. Oſwald was quite turned with the flattering blandiſhments of this female Machiavel; ducal coronets and ſupporters ſwam before her eyes; a long train of illuſtrious progenitors, paſſed in review, like the deſcendants of Banquo, before her mental viſion. She wrote immediately to her lawyer in town, to procure for her a houſe elegantly furniſhed, while all was buſtle

and confuſion at the Abbey, to prepare for their departure.

The Miſs Oſwalds, whoſe minds were inflated by their high-raiſed hopes, dreamed of kings, princes, and courts, while their booby brother, who, with the pride of his mother, inherited all her ignorance, was induced by the former, to aſpire to the envied dignity of marrying a woman of quality; and by the latter, to ſuppoſe that Lady Fanny was deſperately in love with him. This idea her Ladyſhip had taken ſome pains to foſter, by ſhewing him a moſt marked preference to all the other male viſitants at the Abbey.

Young Oſwald was flattered by the attentions of a beautiful woman of faſhion, at an age when the paſſions do what they pleaſe with the *wiſeſt* of mankind, it will raiſe no wonder that he eaſily perſuaded himſelf that he was moſt violently attached to Lady Fanny, encouraged by the ſighing ſoftneſs of her manners, and the ſmiles of approbation

tion ſhe honoured him with, when he accompanied her in her rides and walks. One auſpicious day, in that very ſummer houſe that had nearly proved ſo fatal to Ellinor, did he throw himſelf at the feet of his fair enſlaver, and in the unadorned language of nature, poured out his hopes, and wiſhes, that ſhe would deign to accept his humble ſuit.

Lady Fanny, who had been long waiting with impatience for the preſent moment, after a pauſe, in which ſhe congratulated herſelf on her good management, gave him one of her fair hands to kiſs, while ſhe averted her pretty face, to hide the confuſion ſhe did *not* feel; ſhe owned a mutual flame, but ſaid, that the Earl, her father, whoſe pride and ambition had formed very different projects for her future ſettlement in marriage, ſhe was well appriſed would never give his conſent to her matching with a *plebeian*; "for, though the Oſwalds are a very reſpectable family, he would ſay, that you derive your birth

from a wine-merchant of Crutched Friars, and the daughter of a ſhoe-maker; of courſe you can never expect to mix with the ancient family of the Flutters."

"Oh! my deareſt Lady Fanny, ſay not this; give me ſome hopes, or I will go and throw myſelf this minute into the pond before your eyes; for I cannot, will not live without you. If you think your father will never conſent, let us give him the go-bye, and run off to Scotland. The old blackſmith will chain us together in a trice, and as I have fortune enough for both, I care not if he refuſes to give you any."

"You are ſo faſcinating, my dear Oſwald, and your arguments are ſo irreſiſtibly *concluſive*, that I believe, though I ſee the imprudence of the ſtep, I ſhall allow myſelf to be prevailed upon to accompany you to the *land of cakes*,—if but to give a convincing proof of the ſtrength of my affection, and my perfect reliance on your honour."

"Thank

"Thank you, thank you, a thouſand times, my dear Lady Fanny, now then you will ſoon be my own; but I had forgot that I ought to talk to my mother, and tell her all about it, and aſk her conſent, and alſo that of my *good* guardian, Sir James Lavington."

"What, Sir, when I condeſcend to forget my rank and expectations in life, and the duty I owe my father, to join my fate with yours, without his approbation, do you expect I will allow you to conſult your parent, while I am inſulting mine, by marrying you without his knowledge? If you ſay *one* word about the buſineſs to Mrs. Oſwald, or to that erect walking regulator, Sir James Lavington, to whom I feel a mortal antipathy, I will never ſee you more, ſhould it *even* break my heart."

"Dear Lady Fanny, on my knees let me entreat your forgiveneſs; do not ſpoil your pretty face with frowns, and it ſhall be *all* as you pleaſe."

After having puniſhed his temerity by a well acted anger, as long as ſhe thought it *politic* to do ſo, ſhe deſcended from her altitudes, and permitted him to ſeal his pardon by a kiſs.

It was now ſettled, that he ſhould ſet off on his return to Oxford, the ſame day the Campleys left them; that ſhe ſhould remain at the Abbey till the day after, when, on the receipt of a forged letter from the Earl, her father, ſaying, he was very ill, and requeſted her immediate attendance, ſhe and her woman would directly leave Morton Abbey, and join him at Southampton, where he was to wait *incog.* their arrival. By this plan they would not be even ſuſpected, and would reach the abode of the northen vulcan, and be joined in indiſſoluble bands, before they ſhou'd be even miſſed by any of their relatives.

This momentous affair agreed on, they parted mutually pleaſed; Lady Fanny that ſhe

had carried a point, to *her* of the utmoſt conſequence, for which, and another reaſon that will at a future time appear, ſhe had conſented to be ſhut up with the torpid and ignorant ſociety, that formed the party at Morton Abbey, whom ſhe ſincerely deſpiſed and heartily laughed at.

When ſhe found Ellinor had gained the heart of Sir Harry Hurry, whom ſhe came into the country with a firm determination to trammel in the chains of matrimony, which had induced her to accept the invitation of Lady Lavington to viſit Avon Place; and though Ellinor had refuſed his offers, there was no chance to lure the Baronet into the ſnare ſhe had laid for him, then it was Lady Fanny turned her thoughts on the hopeful heir of Morton Abbey, whoſe ignorance ſhe ſoon perceived would make him an eaſy dupe to her artifices. For this purpoſe ſhe deſcended from her quality conſequence,—flattered the mother, praiſed the daughters, and called forth

all her ſeductive attractions to faſcinate the ſon.

So well were her plans laid, that not *one* of them failed; for ſhe was become ſo great a favourite with Mrs. Oſwald, when her viſit ended ſo diſgracefully at Avon-Place, that ſhe muſt have left Hampſhire directly, covered with deſerved ignominy, before her plots were ripe for execution, had not Mrs. Oſwald given her an invitation to paſs the remainder of the autumn at the Abbey. This ſhe received with joy, and accepted with alacrity, convinced that fortune was on her ſide, and the game all in her own hands: how ſhe *played* it has been already ſhewn.

As to the ſtory of the Earl, her father's conſent not being to be obtained, it was a ſcene in the *farce*, that Lady Fanny had thought fit to introduce to ſtrengthen the intereſt of the piece, by giving it the zeſt of difficulty, and thereby to heighten the *denouement*, by throwing obſtacles in the way of her lover, that

that ſhe might be enabled to profeſs having made the ſacrifice of duty to love, to gain a fair opportunity of objecting to Mr. Oſwald's conſulting his mother; well aſſured if that Lady had wrote to the Earl on the ſubject of her ſon's union with his daughter, the return of the poſt would have brought his conſent and approbation. Tired of her extravagance, and having no fortune to give, he would have been ſincerely rejoiced to have ſeen her ſo well eſtabliſhed, and her tottering reputation ſaved by matrimony, the hope of which he had long ſince given over ſeeing accompliſhed in the circles of faſhion, where her Ladyſhip's celebrity was on the *wane*—her fame and expectations well known, and properly eſtimated.

There was another reaſon for not allowing Oſwald to acquaint his mother with his paſſion; ſhe had ſounded that Lady about her ſon's choice of a wife, and found there would be a great ſtruggle before ſhe could determine between her pride and avarice,

for

for though Mrs. Oſwald would have been flattered with having Lady Fanny for a daughter, ſhe would expect her to bring a ſufficient fortune to ſupport her title. To have induced her to conſent, would have been a work of time; and to *wait* for a huſband much longer, did not ſuit Lady Fanny; added to this, ſhe had long ſince been of the age that the legiſlature allows to be that of diſcretion, therefore ſhe muſt owe the notoriety of a Scottiſh tour, to her lover, who was yet an *infant*. She was determined to reſign her liberty with all poſſible *eclat*, if it is not a miſnomer to call that reſignation, when a woman marries with a reſolution to enjoy it in a ſtill greater latitude.

About this period, it was made known at Morton Abbey, that Lady John was ſummoned to London by the Duke of Dreadnought, to meet her ſon.

Campley, who had been mortified to the ſoul, at the cool ſcorn with which Ellinor treated

treated him, ſtruck with wonder at the ſtrength of mind that enabled her to oppoſe his perſecutions, and the wiſdom which ſhe had ſhewn in baffling his attempts, came to an inſtant reſolution to follow her directly to town, and to leave no means unattempted to get her into his power, convinced this might be done with more eaſe and ſafety in the buſtle of a great city, than in the retirement of a country village.

In conſequence of this arrangement, he, the very ſame evening, deſired Mrs. Campley to be ready to ſet out the next morning for their houſe in Portman-Square, as it was now quite ready for their reception. This requeſt met her cheerful acquieſcence, for ſhe was heartily tired of her country couſins, enraged at the neglectful coolneſs of her *caro ſpoſo*—and longed moſt ardently to blaze forth with all her ſplendour, in the regions of faſhion, that ſhe might have an opportunity to practice thoſe leſſons of repriſals on her huſband for his infidelity, that, ſhe had been inſtructed by

Lady

Lady Fanny, was the invariable rule of conduct purſued in ſimilar ſituations, by thoſe *toniſh* wives with whom ſhe was in future to aſſociate, and whoſe manners it was her higheſt ambition to imitate.

Campley having given his orders to Le Neuf, that the carriages ſhould be at the door the next morning at the breakfaſt hour, long before he thought it neceſſary to acquaint his wife with his haſty reſolves, aſtoniſhment was viſibly painted in the faces of the company, when they ſaw them draw up to the gate, properly prepared for a journey; which Lady Cayenne firſt expreſſed, ſaying; "lord, Colonel, you b'ent a going away, in all this here hurry, without making us acquainted with your 'tenſion; why it 'ant poſſible for us to be ready; the waſherwoman fetched our things but yeſterday, and I dares ſay they are all wet in the tub at this *wery* inſtant."

The

The Colonel, with the moſt provoking compoſure, ſipping his chocolate, replied, "I am, Lady Cayenne, moſt aſſuredly going to London, directly: a mere airing of a few miles is not an object of profound thinking, therefore my movements generally ariſe from the ebullition of the moment; of courſe, there was no time for making you acquainted with them, had I perceived the neceſſity of the meaſure; for though you did me the honour to come in my *ſuite* to Morton-Abbey, I had no right from thence to infer, you meant me the ſuperlative happineſs of accompanying me on my return. I ſuppoſe you will ſtay till Mrs. Oſwald's family go to town; this I ſhould recommend, as the things *now* in the waſhing-tub will, in that caſe, have proper time to dry."

Lady Fanny burſt into a loud fit of laughter, exclaiming, "what a droll provoking devil it is;" while Mrs. Campley bit her lips, to conceal her chagrin at her mother's vulgarity, and her huſband's inſulting irony. Sir Chriſtopher, beating a tattoo

with his foot, muttered between his teeth, "Ah, Mary, thee art rightly ſerved, for obliging me to conſent to give him my daughter, and a hundred thouſand pounds."—In anſwer to this ſpeech, his faſhionable ſon-in-law only hummed an opera air.

Mrs. Oſwald, who had drawn up at the firſt mention of their departure into one of her moſt perpendicular attitudes, was not *clear*, whether it was correct for her to ſhew reſentment at this abrupt decampment of her gueſts, whoſe viſit had coſt her ſo much in money and manners; but Lady Fanny, her oracle, ſeeing her dilemma, whiſpered, "There was nothing in it; it was only the *eaſe* of faſhion, for people of the higheſt *ton* always uſe your houſe with the ſame, or greater freedom they would do at an inn; treating the maſter as the hoſt, and his ſervants as the waiters; calling for what they liked without ceremony; ſtaying as long as ſuited their convenience; and departing when it ceaſed to do ſo, without the troubleſome formality of *leave-taking*."

Thus

Thus tutored and enlightened, Mrs. Oſwald bid them adieu, with as much urbanity, as her ſtarched manners and rigid muſcles would allow her to aſſume. The Colonel, to rid himſelf at once of the pouting and grumbling of his Lady mother-in-law, and the frowns of Sir Chriſtopher, handed Mrs. Campley into the phaeton; telling Mrs. Oſwald, he hoped ſoon to have the happineſs of ſeeing her in London; when bowing coolly to the reſt of the company, he leapt into the carriage; gathering up the reins; laſhed on his ſleek bays; and was out of ſight of the abbey, before the party he left behind, found the uſe of their tongues.

The firſt that did ſo, was Emma Oſwald, who having over heard what Lady Fanny ſaid to her mother about the faſhionable manners, and eaſy *nonchalance*, practiſed by modern viſitants, ſaid, "certainly your ladyſhip muſt have been ſpeaking ironically, when you ſaid the behaviour of Colonel Campley, was right and decorous, as practiſed by the *toniſh* world; or the graces and

manners

manners ſo ſtrongly recommended to his ſon by Lord Cheſterfield; and that are exemplified in Richardſon's hero, Sir Charles Grandiſon, muſt be totally wrong."

"Not at all, my dear Emma, thoſe ancient worthies meant what they ſaid, and acted as they wrote; they were diſciples of what is now denominated the *old ſchool*; the manners and maxims of which became obſolete with the large bags, long ſwords, laced ruffles, and ſtiff ſkirted coats, with which the pupils of the *one*, and the heroes of the *other*, ornamented their perſons. But with the cropped hair, round hat, large neckcloth, drab frock, knowing jemmy, and rolled down-boots, the wearers have adopted, what they call eaſe and freedom; which you will find explained in Johnſon's Dictionary, under the head booriſh manners, rude impertinence, or diſguſting indifference; theſe united qualities conſtitute the *new ſchool*."

Emma laughed at Lady Fanny's deſcription of ancient and modern manners; "but ſurely your ladyſhip cannot be ſerious in aſſerting,

aſſerting, that *dreſs* can have any influence on our actions?"

"Moſt undoubtedly my dear, I am; I will give you a couple of caſes in point. I have ſeen a young Oxonian, who was conſtantly grinning to ſhew his white teeth, playing as many tricks as a monkey, to gain a ſmile of approbation; who would fetch, carry, and cringe, with as much docility as my ſpaniel; no ſooner was he *japanned*, had his queue cut off, his hair curled round his neck, than he aſſumed clerical conſequence; ſtalked into the room with a ſtiff bow, contracted his mouth, knit his brows, to make himſelf appear ſerious; and laid down the law and the goſpel as dogmatically, as the moſt *ſolemn fop* of his order.—

"A red coat has the ſame power of effecting a tranſmigration on its wearer. There was little Tom Twitter, who, brought up by his Lady Mother, was never permitted to face the North wind. Mrs. Twitter always filled her pockets with eider-down tippets,

tippets, and boſom friends, in which ſhe herſelf incaſed this ſhivering *atom*, when he retired from a rout, or a public place of amuſement, before ſhe could conſent to his encountering the breeze that muſt have blown on his ſallow countenance, ere he reached the chariot. By this management, the poor animal became ſo nervous, that one night he rung up the whole houſe, and brought Mrs. Twitter out of her bed in any agony of terrour; becauſe a harmleſs cat had found its way to his dreſſing room, which he accuſed of ſtaring in his face; doubtleſs the animal might have done ſo, being aſtoniſhed at his maſters groteſque appearance, folded from head to heel in fleecy hoſiery.

" At another time he fainted away, while holding a candle to a ſurgeon, who was dreſſing a wound in the head of a friend, who had received a contuſion by a fall from his horſe. Yet this effeminate epitome of man, was ambitious of being admired for his courage by the ladies, to whom his whole time was dedicated. As he had frequent occaſion to obſerve their predilection for martial

tial heroes, at leaſt to their regimentals, after many efforts, he prevailed on his mother, to allow him to purchaſe a commiſſion in the guards, firſt having promiſed her, to pay all due attention to his dear ſelf; never to lounge up St. James's-ſtreet, when the pavement was damp; to ſleep when on guard, upon a down feather-bed, enveloping himſelf in a *double* portion of his uſual night habiliments. On theſe terms, he wrung from his doating mamma an unwilling conſent.

No ſooner did he ſurvey himſelf in his favourite mirror, clothed in ſcarlet and gold, with his mighty ſword girded to his ſide; the ſilken ſaſh infolding his waſte,

" Glittering with lace the hat adorned his head,
" Grac'd and diſtinguiſhed by the ſmart cockade,"

than he felt valiant, his little heart panted for fame, he longed to perform deeds of wonderous proweſs. What was to be done? the nation was at that time, happily at *peace*; but fortune, who ever favours the *brave*, ſoon befriended

friended this would-be hero, by preſenting him with an opportunity of gathering laurels within the precincts of Hyde Park.

"A brother officer, the counterpart of himſelf, truſting to the placidity of diſpoſition for which Tom had ever been famed, took occaſion one day after dinner, when they were both on guard, to *quiz* him, for the diverſion of the company. Among other things, he aſked him, why he encumbered his frail body, by wearing a ſword as heavy as himſelf? as he ſuppoſed it was only to gain notoriety he entered into the army, he recommended a page to carry it before him, as that would more effectually anſwer his purpoſe. All the courage our new made officer had acquired from his ſcarlet coat, fluſhed now his cheek, and animated his heart. He told his antagoniſt, that the beſt way to ſhow him he could wield this weapon, which he deſcribed as ſo ponderous, was to give him a meeting the next morning and

try its metal. In vain the other attempted to paſs it off as a good joke; it would not do—Captain Twitter found *that* was his fighting day; in conſequence they met, and like Cæſar, he came, he fought, he conquered; with his good ſword, he ſliced off his antagoniſt's right ear and a part of his ſhoulder; this fixed his character for courage, and he has ever ſince been called *fighting* Tom."

"By theſe inſtances, to which I could add many others, I hope I have convinced you Emma, that dreſs in general acts as a ſtimulus to the paſſions of its wearers. You will find this maxim verified, when on your arrival in London, your pretty perſon will be ornamented by Le Brun, and you flutter in the vortex of faſhion, admired by the men, and envied by the women; then will you perceive your ideas of the moral fitneſs of things, totally changed from thoſe you have imbibed through the ſtarch morality of your mother, and the preaching documents of her round headed chaplain, as you have walked with them

through the domains that ſurround this antiquated pile, arrayed in your ſhining callico gown, muſlin cap, and ſtraw hat."

Before Emma could anſwer Lady Fanny, ſhe was ſent for by her mother, it being her week to overlook the houſekeeper's accounts.

CHAP. VIII.

LADY Fanny ſtrolled into the park, where ſhe was ſoon met by her lover, who was prepared to ſet out for Southampton, to wait till ſhe joined him, which ſhe promiſed to do the next evening. At hearing announced what he thought was to conſtitute the ſummit of his earthly happineſs, he rubbed his hands, cut capers, and expreſſed that exuberant joy he uſed to feel when a *ſchool-boy* going home for the holliday receſs.

Lady Fanny ſaw his imbecility, and felt the moſt ſovereign contempt for the *man* ſhe had choſen for a huſband, to whom in a few days ſhe was to give her hand, and ſwear to love, honour, and obey.

But her ladyſhip, by a faſhionable education, was freed from the pangs a ſenſe of religion would have given to a *leſs* enlightened female, on taking an oath ſhe was conſcious ſhe ſhould never adhere to. Well aware ſhe ſhould be kept in countenance, in her direliction from matrimonial duties, by moſt of the high bred wives of her acquaintance, ſhe permitted no ſuch idle conſiderations to weigh againſt her reſolution of marrying this ſapient repreſentative of the Oſwald family; whoſe fortune ſhe intended appropriating to ſupport herſelf in that ſtyle of ſplendour, that formed, in her idea, the *acme* of human felicity. She therefore haſtened her lover's departure, and returned to the abbey, to order her confidential abigail to make preparations for her own.

Lady Fanny was too artful a contriver, to have any of her plans fail of their intended effect; the next morning, when the party aſſembled at breakfaſt, ſhe told Mrs. Oſwald ſhe had that inſtant received a letter from the

the Earl of Flutter, who was very ill, and had requeſted her to ſet off directly, to join him at their town houſe. That he deſired her to return his thanks to the worthy inhabitants of Morton Abbey, for their polite attentions to his daughter; which he flattered himſelf with returning, when he had the honour of being introduced to them in the metropolis.

Mrs. Oſwald expreſſed her regret at ſo ſoon loſing the company of her fair gueſt, but thought too highly of the duty owing from children to parents, not to haſten her departure on ſuch an occaſion. She inſiſted that her horſes ſhould convey her to Southampton; this Lady Fanny declined, from motives that will be eaſily ſuppoſed by our readers. The chaiſe being drove up to the gate, ſhe embraced the hoſteſs, and her daughters, with a well counterfeited ſorrow; took a friendly leave of Sir Chriſtopher and his lady, whom ſhe made *happy* by promiſing to look in upon them at independent hall;—

enigmatically aſſuring the Oſwalds, that her preſent *abſence* would be the occaſion, when next they met, of rendering them nearer, and dearer to her heart than ever.

As none ſuſpected the elopement of the lovers, they poſted on without any apprehenſion of purſuit, to that land which emancipates from parental authority, and parliamentary reſtriction, the full grown *infants* of Britain; where the matrimonial vulcan ſoon beſtowed on them the nuptial benediction. This concluded, they immediately ſet off for their return to England. From York, where they reſted a few days, Lady Fanny wrote to her father, begging his permiſſion for herſelf and huſband to throw themſelves at his feet, and receive his bleſſing; which, as ſhe knew it was all he had to beſtow on her, ſhe had no doubt of its being chearfully granted.

Mr. Oſwald addreſſed a letter to his mother on the ſame ſubject; on the receipt of it,

it, her ſurpriſe was extreme; but always *dubious* how to conduct herſelf, ſhe knew not whether to be pleaſed or angry at the intelligence; ſhe therefore ordered her carriage immediately, and drove to Sir James Lavington's; who had been returned to Avon Place, ever ſince Lady John had left Bramble Hall. Mrs. Oſwald preſented her ſon's epiſtle to the worthy baronet, deſiring his advice how ſhe ought to act on the preſent occaſion.

"It is too late now, madam, for my opinion to be of any ſervice; had you ſolicited it before you opened your doors to admit Lady Fanny Flutter into your family, moſt certainly, as the friend of your late huſband, and the guardian to his children, I ſhould have requeſted you to ſhun all intercourſe with a woman that, I have fatally experienced, was capable of planning the moſt artful ſchemes, deſtructive to the peace of thoſe, who placed any dependance on her ſpecious manners that without one atom of compunction

would ſacrifice the united world, to accelerate her intereſt, or gratify her vices."

"Oh dear, what will become of my poor James, he will ſoon be ruined by her extravagance."

"Of that I have little doubt; I believe ſhe poſſeſſes a moſt callous heart, that feels only for itſelf. When on Lady Lavington's invitation, ſhe entered my houſe, ſhe found us happy in mutual confidence, and innocent hilarity, content and pleaſed with each other: among us ſhe has ſown thoſe ſeeds of diſtruſt, that have taken deep root in the minds of my wife and daughter, poiſoned all our domeſtic enjoyments, and ultimately baniſhed happineſs from my roof for ever. On full conviction of her baſeneſs, I hinted that her ſociety was no longer deſirable; you then ſolicited to have the honour of her company, though you were no ſtranger to her atrocious behaviout. The reſult of that viſit you now feel; but of its future conſequences to yourſelf and family, I decline ſaying more, I only fear it augurs no good to either."

"But

"But I was deceived, my dear Sir James, by her inſinuating manners; ſhe was ſo civil and kind to me and the girls; ſhe made me believe you were impoſed on by Miſs Harcourt, and that ſhe was exactly the wicked kind of perſon, that you have juſt deſcribed Lady Fanny herſelf to be. Pray tell me how I muſt act in this buſineſs."

"It is now, madam, in vain to regret the paſt; you have but one line of conduct to purſue, to make the beſt you can of the future. Your ſon is now the huſband of Lady Fanny, therefore write to him, that you will receive his wife when he preſents her. I recommend it to you, when you meet, to avoid uſeleſs recrimination on his late behaviour, becauſe it is now irrevocable; by treating his direliction from duty with a mildneſs that his conſcience muſt tell him he does not merit, you will ſtill retain a power over his actions, that anger and reproaches would loſe you for ever."

Mrs. Oſwald promiſed ſhe would endeavour to act as he adviſed, but ſaid, ſhe ſup-

poſed the earl would give his daughter a fortune, when he was informed, that ſhe had not diſgraced herſelf, but had married into a family of great antiquity, and riches.

Sir James anſwered, that no doubt theſe conſiderations would be an inducement with the Earl to forgive Lady Fanny, and extenuate the liberty ſhe had taken, of chooſing a huſband for herſelf, without aſking his conſent. That as to his giving her any thing beſides his bleſſing, it was not to be expected. Thoſe men who ſelect wives from among the nobles of the land, muſt in general content themſelves with a title in lieu of dower; for in this diſſipated age, their fathers find their rent roll very inadequate towards ſupporting their own conſequence, and their heir's expectations. The young ladies are in general educated to make the beſt bargain they can for themſelves, by their rank and perſonal charms; and to form their own eſtabliſhment, as has been now exemplified in the conduct of Lady Fanny."

Mrs.

Mrs. Oſwald and Sir James now parted; the Lady mortified and diſappointed to hear that there were no hopes of any addition being made to her family riches, by her daughter in law; but ſhe comforted herſelf, that the nonage of her ſon, and the good-natured and careleſs vivacity of Lady Fanny, would ſtill permit her to manage the Oſwald eſtate, with her accuſtomed rigid economy. Nothing could be further from her ladyſhip's intentions, than ſuch an arrangement, who thought herſelf fully adequate to take upon her both the government of her huſband and his fortune.

Mrs. Oſwald, on her return to the abbey, wrote a letter of forgiveneſs to her ſon, and engaged to meet the young couple at the houſe in London, that ſhe had ordered to be procured for the reception of her own family, where the bride and bride-groom ſoon arrived. The morning prints properly announced their marriage, with a few additional witticiſms on the occaſion;

and Lady Fanny Oſwald's *deareſt* friends, and inſeparable companions, flocked to her with their congratulations, to ſatisfy their curioſity by viewing the *wild boy*, juſt eloped from his native foreſt, whom her ladyſhip had taken upon herſelf the arduous taſk of *taming*, that they might be enabled to make a report at the Dutcheſs of Matchem's rout, and raiſe a laugh at the ridiculous deſcription of the young married couple, aukward ſiſters, and vulgar mother of her Ladyſhips choſen help-mate.

The Earl of Flutter, after keeping up, for a decorous time, the appearance of anger at his daughter's plebeian choice, allowed himſelf to be prevailed on by the interference of friends, to receive Lady Fanny and her huſband, and to give them his *bleſſing*, avowing that it would be an encouragement to undutiful children, if he rewarded her, by preſenting her a fortune; that if her conduct in future was correct, and ſuch as he could approve,

prove, at his death he ſhould remember ſhe was his child.

Having married Lady Fanny, and patched up a peace among the contending parties, we will leave her to enjoy the ſucceſs of her ſchemes, and triumph in the completion of her wickedneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

LADY John Dareall was ſtill detained in London, by the Duke of Dreadnought's lingering illneſs. Ellinor had been for ſome weeks almoſt conſtantly in the company of the faſcinating Dareall; he attended her when ſhe rode on horſeback, read to her while ſhe worked, accompanied her on the violin, when ſhe ſung or played on the harp, aſſiſted her in her favourite amuſements of drawing and painting, with his advice; as he excelled in both theſe arts, ſhe daily improved by his leſſons.

"She loved the precepts for the teacher's ſake."

Time

Time flew on downy pinions, in the ſociety of Lady John and her ſon; it appeared to Ellinor to be the epocha of her happineſs; ſhe trod on air; the pleaſure ſhe experienced gave a brilliancy to her wit, and animated her countenance; a hundred Cupids ſported in the dimples that played round her mouth; pleaſed and happy herſelf, ſhe communicated thoſe delightful ſenſations, to the boſoms of her companions.

It would have been impoſſible for a young man, with the vivid feelings and unbridled paſſions by which Mr. Dareall has been deſcribed to be actuated, unattached to any other woman, not to have been captivated by the various excellencies diſplayed by our charming heroine. He was, in the modern language *we* profeſs to write in, moſt deſperately in love, at the very firſt glance, when ſhe appeared to him in the humble character of his mother's fair handmaid. He was then ſtruck by her genuine and unadorned charms; but ſince that period, each revolving day had

had unfolded new perfections, new beauties to his wondering eyes; and convinced him that Ellinor and happineſs were the ſame thing; and that, by poſſeſſing the former, he could alone inſure himſelf the latter.

He had cautiouſly avoided letting Ellinor perceive the lover in his behaviour, till, under the character of a friend and preceptor, he had gained ſecure poſſeſſion of her heart. Before ſhe miſtruſted the ſubtle foe, the ſly urchin had ſo effectually deceived her, by covering the quickſands of paſſion with the roſes of friendſhip, that ſhe did not miſtruſt danger, till ſhe felt its conſequences. She laughed at the fancied terrours that had led her to fear this too amiable man, and to doubt her own powers of reſiſtance. She rejoiced that ſhe did not decline a certain good, for an imaginary evil; ſhe felt a pride in being enabled to convince Lady John, that her fears for her heart, were void of foundation; that it was poſſible to feel a friendſhip and eſteem, even for the

the accompliſhed Dareall, without experiencing a ſofter ſenſation. Thus, blinded to her danger, ſhe drank deep of

"The cordial drop, heaven in our cup has thrown,
"To make the nauſeous draught of life go down,"

before ſhe was conſcious her lips had touched it.

Lady John, whoſe knowledge of the human heart, and watchful obſervance of Ellinor and Mr. Dareall, enabled her ſoon to diſcover her friend's growing paſſion, which was the *more* dangerous, as ſhe herſelf appeared perfectly unconſcious of it. This convinced her ladyſhip of the inutility of warning or advice, to thoſe fated to feel the deſpotic ſway of the blind Deity; ſhe knew not what judgment to form of her ſon; for though evidently charmed by Ellinor's merit and beauty, he guarded his words and actions with the ſhield of worldly caution; and whenever he thought he had ſaid too much, he laughed it off, by adopting a ſtrain of romantic

romantic bombaſt. Lady John determined to let things take their courſe for ſome time longer, and then to act as her future obſervation ſhould juſtify.

Things were in this ſtate in Park-lane, when one morning, on the ladies entering the breakfaſt room, a note was delivered from Mr. Dareall to his mother, acquainting her, that at three o'clock his revered uncle had breathed his laſt ſigh in his arms; that he had ſent to his father, whom he every minute expected, to put his ſeals on his papers, &c. till his will ſhould be opened; that he was determined not to leave the late duke's remains, till they were depoſited in the mauſoleum of his anceſtors. He adviſed her grace, as this event would deprive her for ſome time of air and exerciſe in town, to make an excurſion to Bramble Hall, where he would have the pleaſure of ſeeing her on his return from his uncle's funeral, and the honour of eſcorting her back to London; as he meant

to

to beg her advice and aſſiſtance, to enable him to bear his fortune and honours meekly.

Her ladyſhip, to whom in future we muſt give her new title, having read the letter, gave it to Ellinor, ſaying, you will perceive by this, the event we have ſo long expected, has now happened. So ſituated, I do not think we can do better than follow John's advice; for my ſpirits have been for ſome time much below par, at ſeeing the poor duke lingering on the confines of the grave, for ſo many weeks paſt. It has depreſſed the pride of exiſtence, and enervated my mind. The air of Hampſhire will again envigorate my mental and bodily faculties. It may appear like affectation to ſay, I grieve at the duke's releaſe from a world, whoſe pleaſures have long ſince receded from his graſp, and left him nothing but pain and ſorrow; but his fatherly kindneſs to my ſon, and brotherly attention to me, claimed my warmeſt gratitude, and make me feel a vacuum in my heart, and a regret

at

at his loſs, that I muſt exert all my energies to combat.

The dutcheſs now wrote to Marquis Fearleſs, to acquaint him that ſhe ſhould follow his advice, and leave town for Bramble-Hall, in the courſe of the day; where ſhe ſhould expect to embrace him, as ſoon as he had fulfilled the melancholy duty he had, with ſo much propriety, pledged himſelf to perform. It was ſo late before the dutcheſs had made her arrangements, that it was near night when they left London.

Ellinor was frightened at the idea of croſſing Hounſlow Heath by moonlight; the dutcheſs, to whom fear was a ſtranger, rallied her terrours, telling her, ſhe would ſupply the place of her ſon, and act as her knight-errant; aſſured her that no robbers were deſperate enough to attack two carriages, attended by out-riders well armed; ſhe added, "You know, Ellinor, I always travel with loaded piſtols, which, if occaſion calls, I ſhall make no ſcruple of uſing; ſo away with theſe woman-

iſh

iſh tremours, and give me an opportunity to admire your heroiſm, among your other virtues."

Ellinor, aſhamed any longer to object, ſtepped into the chaiſe, with a heavy heart; but whether that ſenſation was occaſioned by the fear of travelling by night, or the leaving London without ſeeing the marquis, or *both* united, was a point ſhe could not herſelf determine. They changed horſes at Hounſlow, and under the auſpices of a bright moon, had nearly croſſed the heath, when the dutcheſs began to rally her companion on her apprehenſions, and to enquire if ſhe was now convinced they were unneceſſary.

Ellinor's attention was at that moment wholly engroſſed by the appearance of four horſemen, who juſt then galloped up to the ſide of the chaiſe on which ſhe ſat; dying with fear, ſhe whiſpered the dutcheſs, "you will, I doubt, find my *preſentiments* of evil, were but too juſt." She in the ſame tone, tried to reaſſure her, ſaid, ſhe ſuppoſed they were

were farmers returning from ſome market, as they appeared wrapt up in horſemen's coats. They now rode ſometimes before, then by the ſide of the carriage, till they came to a gloomy part of the heath, when a whiſtle was heard, which ſounded as not far off—this was returned by the ſtrangers; at hearing it, Ellinor, trembling and ſilent, gave herſelf up for loſt.

At that inſtant, two of the men preſented their piſtols to the drivers, and bid them ſtop, or they would fire; while a third drove his piſtol through the glaſs, on that ſide where the dutcheſs ſat, ſwearing a moſt horrid oath, that if ſhe attempted to ſpeak, ſhe was a dead woman. At the ſame moment, another of the gang, came up to Ellinor, who, on his forcing open the door, had fallen to the bottom of the chaiſe in a fainting fit. The dutcheſs, whoſe preſence of mind, rouſed by the critical ſituation ſhe was placed in, was watching for an advantage; ſaw a man in a maſk, who was ſtanding near

near the carriage, advance, ſnatch up Ellinor in his arms, and attempt to lift her before the man on horſeback, who held the door. She now perceived it was not their purſes thoſe ruffians wanted, but to rob her of her companion.

A report of firing was heard, behind the chaiſe, which occaſioned the man who guarded her to turn round. She ſaw this was a moment not to be *loſt*, and gallantly determined to riſk her own life, to reſcue her friend from theſe bold raviſhers. She drew both her piſtols from the pocket, and and cocking one, levelled it at the perſon who had dragged Ellinor out of the chaiſe; while he was in the act of lifting her to his accomplice, he received the charge, ſtaggered, and fell to the ground, with his fair burthen in his arms. Several ſhot were now fired, one of them came through the back of the carriage, whizzed cloſe to the head of the dutcheſs, and went out at the front glaſs. All this was the work of a few minutes.

The dutcheſs expected inſtant death, for having, as ſhe thought, killed the leader of this banditti; determined to ſell her life dearly, ſhe held the undiſcharged piſtol in her hand, reſolving to ſhoot the firſt man that approached her.

At this inſtant, a carriage drove in ſight; the ruffians attempted to make their eſcape, and to carry with them their fallen companion; when the dutcheſs, who wiſhed to know the planner of this daring outrage, jumped out, vowing ſhe would kill the firſt perſon who attempted to remove the body. Awed by her courage, and terrified for fear of being taken, they galloped off different ways over the heath. By this time the vehicle whoſe appearance had put them to the rout, drove up to the ſcene of action; the owner ſtopped to enquire if he could be of any ſervice, when, to to the great joy of the dutcheſs, ſhe found in him, her favourite Sir Harry Hurry; who, like *herſelf*, careleſs of danger, was puſhing on to get to London that night.

The

She now explained the occaſion of his ſeeing her there, and the miſadventures of the evening. They ſet about examining the dying, and the dead. Ellinor, who ſtill continued in a fit, was lifted into the carriage, unconſcious of the miſchief ſhe had occaſioned, or the horrors of the ſcene by which ſhe had been ſurrounded. They next turned to the man who had been ſhot, in whom there ſtill appeared ſigns of life. He was put into Sir Harry's chaiſe, and ſent on to Hounſlow; while he got into the Dutcheſs's carriage, in hopes that theſe ſeeming myſteries would be elucidated by the confeſſion of the wounded man.

Ellinor, by the application of ſalts, began to recover her ſenſes, to enquire where ſhe was, and if her dear Dutcheſs was ſafe. Of this ſhe was aſſured by that lady, as ſhe preſſed her in her arms, and deſired ſhe would aſk no queſtions till they returned to the inn, where ſhe ſhould know all in due time.

The piſtols that had been fired, belonged to the two men that had been left to combat the outriders; the party were ſix in number. One of them, it was ſuppoſed, was wounded by his own piſtol, which had been wrenched out of his hand, and fired at him by one of the footmen; who, to their aſtoniſhment, when they took their own from the holſters, found the charges had been drawn, though they were poſitive they had loaded them that morning. By this manœuvre, they were prevented from defending their lady, and found themſelves at the mercy of their opponents.

On the return of the Dutcheſs and her ſuite to Hounſlow, her Grace and Sir Harry repaired to the room, where the wounded man had been laid on a couch, and a ſurgeon ſent for: but, what could equal their ſurpriſe, on his diſguiſe being taken off, and the maſk from his face, to recogniſe the *honourable* Colonel Campley. The medical man being arrived, the Dutcheſs withdrew;

drew; Sir Harry remained in the room while he examined the wound; when he declared, if a fever did not enſue, there was no danger, the ball having lodged in the ſhoulder, which he thought might be extracted with ſafety. The Colonel had alſo received a contuſion in the back of his head when he fell, by which blow he had been ſtunned, ſo as to make them ſuppoſe him dead.

The Dutcheſs rejoiced at the favourable account brought her by Sir Harry, for ſhe wiſhed not to deprive a being of life, ſo ill prepared as Campley, to render up an account of his actions to his Creator. How to puniſh him with propriety ſhe knew not; to make it a public affair by giving him up to the laws of his country, ſhe was convinced would be an act of juſtice; but in doing ſo, ſhe ſuppoſed that the cauſe of the outrage muſt be aſſigned, which would bring Ellinor forth to public notoriety, again expoſe her character to the ſneers of the

doubting prudent, the ſatire of the malevolent, and the nine days' converſation of the tale-loving ſpinſters. To avoid this, ſhe determined not to form too haſty a reſolulution, but to allow herſelf to be guided by circumſtances.

She went to Ellinor, who was much recovered from the effects of the fright; ſhe intreated the Dutcheſs to acquaint her with what happened after ſhe had fainted. This ſhe would not comply with, but told her ſhe ſhould know all on the morrow, recommending her to go to bed directly. She then returned to Sir Harry, and ſent Bloſſom to Ellinor. This abigail who was too full of the frights and fears ſhe had experienced, and aſtoniſhment at the wonderful occurrences of the evening, to keep ſilence with her whom ſhe looked upon as the cauſe of *all*, while ſhe aſſiſted to undreſs her, thus began.

" Lord,

"Lord, Miſs Hellinor, a fine frit I ave bin in this night, that's for ſartin; if it ad not bin for Mr. John, hour butler, I ſhould have *ſounded*, as well as you, but he holded me in his harms, and ſaid he would die with me. When I left the all, little did I think I ſhould ave bin in a battle; the ſong ſays "it's a glorious thing," but in my mind it is a moſt tremendous gaſhful ſight."

"Bloſſom, as you ſeem to have been an attentive ſpectator of the ſhocking ſcene, you can give me ſome information of what paſſed, after terrour had deprived me of my ſenſes."

"That I can, Miſs, for I ſeed it all, tho' I ſhut my eyes when they ſhot; but Mr. John tould me all ſince. There *was* ſix great fellers which ſurrounded hus, beſide im in the maſk; one of them put a young cannon into the ſhay where I was, and tould me he would kill me dead if I did not old my d——d bawling tongue. Oh dear, ow I did trimble! Richard and Thomas tried to fire, but ſomebody ad taken all the powder

powder hout of their piſtols, and Mr. John would not ſhoot at them, for fear they ſhould ave returned it, and killed me, becauſe I was ugging him faſt round the neck; for thinks I to myſelf, if I muſt die, it ſhall be in the harms of my feller ſarvant."

"Well, this is all your own part of the buſineſs, my good Bloſſom; come to that which concerns your lady and myſelf," ſaid Ellinor, impatiently.

"So I ſhall, Miſs, in good time, but as Mounſeer le Nif, the Curnel's wally de ſham, ſays, I ſhall ſarve myſelf firſt, and my friends hafterwards, for that 's quite the tone."

"Well, get on, get on."

"I am a-going,—where was I,—you ave quite and clean put it out of my ead, for you be in ſuch a urry and fluſter.—Oh! now I ave it again; there *was* one of the rogues, who eld his gun to Lady John's ead; oh dear, I am in ſuch a conbuſtion, I forgets my manners, I meen her Greece; when another of the knaves, who was on his legs, took you up in his harms, and was going to lift

you

you on orſeback, to one of his complices, when her Greece walliantly fired, and ſhot him dead, with two piſtols, one in each and."

"*Dead!*" exclaimed Ellinor, "oh God! has that firſt of women, to ſave me, endangered a life ſo deſervedly precious to all thoſe who know how to appreciate its worth? and, by ſending an unprepared mortal to his account, given a conſtant ſource of remorſe to her ſuſceptible heart? Ill-fated Ellinor, born to bring trouble, ſorrow, and repentance, on all who afford thee protection! In time thou wilt be ſhunned as a portentous comet, or malignant diſeaſe, threatening death and deſolation wherever thou appeareſt." Thus apoſtrophiſing on her wayward fortune, ſhe drowned her bright eyes in tears.

"Dear me, Miſs Hellinor," cried the terrified Bloſſom, "do not take hon ſo, for if you do hinterrupt me in this here manner, I ſhall never finiſh my ſtory."

"Well, well, I will be attentive—but haſten to the end."

"I am not come to the middle yet," muttered the loquacious Abigail.—"Down dropt the dead man, with you in his harms; and one of the other knaves fired his piſtols through her Greece's ſhay, when thought as ſhe had killed his comrade. Richard, who is my Couſin Jarmin, and as bold as a lion, ſeeing this, had a tuzzle with the feller, and got one of his fire harms, which he diſcharged at him, and down a dropt,—but I don't know where he's dead or no, 'cauſe his complices carried him hoff; and I belief would have carried us *all hoff*, if a carriage had not comed up at the nick of time; and whoſe ſhould it be, but your hold lovyer, Sir Arry Urry; ſo then the thieves all run away, and they put the dead man into his ſhay and we come back to this ere hin; and the doctor is now with the man her Greece ſhot.

"Alas!" exclaimed Ellinor, "what occaſion has a dead man for medical aſſiſtance?"

"Why,

"Why, lord, Miſs, if you ad given me time, I ſhould have told you, the doctor ſays e's not dead, and perhaps may recover, when the bullet's taken out of his ſhoulder."

"Why did you frighten me thus long, with the idea that I was the occaſion of the death of a fellow creature, though an unworthy one? why not tell me at firſt that he was only wounded?"

"Becauſe I thought you axed for the whole ſtory, and as he did not come to life till the end of it, how could I tell you before its time, that the Curnel was not dead, only ſtunned by the knock he got on the ead, when he came bump down, with you upon him."

"Did I hear you right, Bloſſom? what Colonel do you mean?"

"Why, what Curnel ſhould I mean, but the onourable Curnel Campley, for he it was, for ſartin, that comed with all his *merrydons* to run away with you. So its all along, Mr. John ſays, of his hinceſtuous love; for you know he's a married man, ſo it muſt

be quite unnatural—that we were *all* like to be murdered, raviſhed, robbed, and run away with, and if the Curnel ſhould die, it will be a ſad thing, for then her Greece will be anged."

No ſooner had Ellinor found by the garrulous girl's circumlocutory and tedious tale, the new obligation ſhe owed to the Dutcheſs, and that this daring attempt had been made by her conſtant tormentor, Campley, than ſhe began to dreſs herſelf again, as it would have been impoſſible for her to have ſlept till ſhe had ſeen the Dutcheſs, and expreſſed a part of that gratitude with which her heart overflowed. She ruſhed into the room, where ſhe and Sir Harry were ſitting; throwing herſelf at her feet, ſhe embraced her knees, and with ſtreaming eyes, begged her forgiveneſs for all the trouble ſhe had occaſioned her, expreſſed her thanks for this added obligation, with a force and pathos all her own, to this noble-minded friend,

for

for again ſnatching her from the vile plots of that wretch Campley.

The Dutcheſs raiſed and embraced her; ſoothing her perturbed ſpirits with the kindeſt attentions; "my deareſt Ellinor, I thought you were in bed; who informed you of this?"

"Bloſſom told me all, in her round about manner, and has tortured me the laſt half hour, on the rack of ſuſpence; for no ſpur, applied by my eager impatience, could make her quicken the intelligence."

Supper now being ſerved, the Dutcheſs inſiſted on Ellinor's ſitting down, eating the wing of a chicken, and taking a glaſs of wine. After the ſervants were withdraw, ſhe requeſted her to repeat Bloſſom's account in her own words, of the miſadventures of the evening. This ſhe complied with, and highly diverted both the Dutcheſs and Sir Harry, who laughed heartily at her account of the field of carnage.

They now retired to reſt, the Dutcheſs being determined to remain where ſhe was, till aſſured Campley was out of danger; but, fearful her ſon ſhould be alarmed by the exaggerated and garbled account that would find its way into the news papers, ſhe ſent an expreſs with a letter to acquaint him of the particulars; in conſequence of which, the Marquis met her the next morning at breakfaſt, having brought with him an eminent ſurgeon to examine Campley's wound. She was much pleaſed by this attention of her ſon; for, after hearing the opinion of Mr. John Hunter, ſhe ſhould be enabled to proceed to Hampſhire much eaſier in her mind.

Ellinor now entered the room; her eyes met thoſe of the Marquis, and ſhe bluſhed deeply, aſhamed of all the buſtle ſhe had occaſioned in his family, and fearful it would loſe her his good opinion. He aroſe, and led her to a ſeat; placing himſelf by her ſide, he began to rally her upon the power of her murderous charms, ſaying, "I find the Dutcheſs

Dutcheſs was correct, when ſhe warned me of the danger I muſt expect to encounter as your ſworn knight." By this means he tried to raiſe her depreſſed ſpirits, and reaſſure her.

The Marquis, who had expreſſed great pleaſure at meeting his former friend and playfellow Sir Harry, after they had talked over old ſcenes, attended the ſurgeon with the gentleman that was firſt called into Campley's chamber, who, by the help of the opiate adminiſtered to him, had ſlept tolerably, and had but little fever. The wound was examined, and the ball, which was lodged in the ſhoulder, Mr. John Hunter, gave it as his opinion, might be extracted with ſafety. The operation was performed by that gentleman, with his uſual ability, though not without his patient ſuffering great agony. He pronounced, that there was no danger to be apprehended if the ſymptomatic fever could be kept under; for this purpoſe he directed that no perſon

ſhould

ſhould be allowed to ſpeak to him: having ordered a compoſing draught, the gentlemen retired, for the Marquis and Sir Harry had remained in the room, and aſſiſted to ſupport Campley, while the ſurgeon performed his part. They thought, (like young men) his ſufferings paſt and to come, almoſt a ſufficient puniſhment to expiate his intended offence; eſpecially as they both felt the power of the object by whoſe wonderous charms he had been tempted to commit it.

CHAP. X.

THE Marquis, who was obliged to return inſtantly to London, ſent to deſire half an hour's audience of the Ducheſs before his departure; when, after having acquainted her with the opinion of the ſurgeon reſpecting Campley's wound, and that he had promiſed to ſee his patient again on the morrow, he ſaid, "I ſhould thank your Grace to tell me the whole of the adventures of laſt evening; and it would add to the obligation, if you would favour me by relating ſome part of the hiſtory of your fair *protegée*; for I allow, that my curioſity is much raiſed, and it may help to develop what at preſent appears to be a

little of the marvellous, that a married man ſhould, when the 'Days of chivalry are paſſed,' venture his life, fame, and fortune, to carry away, in open defiance of the laws of his country, a young lady ſo well protected as Miſs Harcourt is by your Grace."

The Dutcheſs, from motives of delicacy for Ellinor's character, had never mentioned any part of her ſtory to the Marquis; for, though ſhe was convinced of her being perfectly innocent of the charges brought againſt her by Lady Fanny and Mrs. Campley, yet her good ſenſe ſuggeſted, that there was ſuch ſtrong preſumptive evidence againſt her, as ſhe ſaw with ſorrow would induce thoſe to think her guilty of artful deception, and coquettiſh levity, who were not acquainted with the cauſes and events, or would not trouble themſelves to inveſtigate them.

Thus pointedly called on by the Marquis, to explain a ſubject ſhe had hitherto ſo cautiouſly avoided; ſhe thought it would tend moſt

moſt to the exculpation of Ellinor, to take up her ſtory from early youth, and bring it down to the preſent period, letting truth ſpeak for itſelf. While the Dutcheſs was recounting the eventful tale of Ellinor's juvenile ſorrows, the vexations and perſecutions ſhe had endured from both ſexes, in the ſhort time that had elapſed ſince ſhe quitted the convent, and by which ſhe was ſtill purſued with unremitting cruelty, the Dutcheſs added, that "her ſituation will be beſt deſcribed in her own emphatic language:" 'Surely, my dear friend, I was born the ſport of fortune; for no ſooner do I find myſelf beloved, cheerful, and happy, one little month, than all my viſionary joys vaniſh; I am torn from every flattering hope, and again fated to combat calumny, prejudice, envy, and ſorrow.'

"This, my dear John, was the ſpeech addreſſed to me this morning by the amiable girl, when talking over the occurrences of the laſt night." The Marquis had liſtened to the Dutcheſs with the moſt ſilent attention,

whom

whom he thanked for the confidence ſhe had placed in him; aſſured her, he ſhould ever hold it ſacred; ſaid, there was ſo much appearance of ambiguity in Ellinor's ſtory, that it required powers beyond thoſe he poſſeſſed to unravel it; it muſt therefore be left to time and chance. The parents of ſo charming a woman, ſhould have very ſtrong reaſons to juſtify their not acknowledging a child, whoſe perſonal and mental accompliſhments muſt be ſo flattering to them, whatever rank they held in ſociety; for, till that was proved, it was not to be ſuppoſed ſhe could eſtabliſh herſelf in life *honourably*; nor could they, while they kept in the back ground, arraign the conduct of any man, who, like the Duke of Southerwood or Colonel Campley, made diſhonourable overtures to their daughter.

The Dutcheſs ſaw clearly by this converſation, there were ſmall hopes for Ellinor; that nothing was farther from the thoughts of the Marquis, than to make her ſuch propoſals

poſals as ſhe might with propriety accept; without it could be made appear, that her conſequence in life gave her pretenſions to that rank, of which her ſon was ſo tenacious, and from which he ſeemed determined to ſelect his wife; keeping in view the advice he had received on the ſubject from the late Duke.

She felt for, and commiſerated the conſtant diſappointments Ellinor ſeemed fated to experience. She had long ſeen how tenderly ſhe was attached to the Marquis; though at preſent her paſſion was a ſecret to herſelf. Had the Dutcheſs thought their affection was mutual, it would have called forth all her exertions in their favour. The ſilence of her ſon on the ſubject, had not given her an opportunity of expreſſing her ſentiments to him. Although it was not exactly the alliance ſhe wiſhed him to form, while Ellinor's birth and connexions were wrapped in ſuch impenetrable myſtery; yet this worthy and truly noble-minded woman had determined, that if ſhe ſaw they could alone form the happineſs

pineſs of each other, to riſe ſuperior to vulgar prejudices, and give her conſent to their union. She perceived little of the tenderly impreſſed lover, that would venture *all*, ſuffer *all*, for the object of his affection, in the cool unimpaſſioned reaſoning Marquis, whoſe attachment for Ellinor ſhe feared, would be found to be of the ſame nature as that of her other lovers, and *ſtop* far ſhort of matrimony.

In anſwer to her ſon's laſt ſpeech, ſhe rereplied,, " I differ from you in opinion. The deſerted ſtate in which Ellinor was left by her parents, and the unremitted cruelty ſhe has experienced from the world through their conduct, with every man of feeling and honour, will be ſtrong inducements to pity and protect her, not an encouragement to debaſing offers deſigned to drive her from every ſafe and honourable aſylum, that ſhe may fall an eaſy victim into the toils ſpread for her by human ſavages, who ſeek ſenſual gratification at the expence of the everlaſting

happineſs

happineſs of the object they profeſs to love. Could I, Marquis, for one moment ſuppoſe you capable, either by open or covert means, of ſeducing a lovely and unfortunate young woman under my protection, no inducement of affection, no ties of conſanguinity, could prevail upon me to pardon ſuch a flagrant act of atrocity, by which I ſhould feel myſelf inſulted in the perſon of my friend. Be wary and cautious how you act in this caſe; mine is not a character to be trifled with or impoſed upon with impunity."

The entrance of a ſervant, who came to acquaint the Marquis that his caraiage was ready, precluded that reply to the Dutcheſs which he was not at all prepared to make. He aroſe to take leave, adviſing his mother to continue her journey to Hampſhire, as there was no danger of Campley's dying; that Mr. John Hunter had promiſed to ſee him daily, till he could be removed with ſafety to his own houſe, and to ſend him a *bulletin* of the ſtate of the wound.

'But

" But I had almoſt forgot to acquaint your Grace, that in the little converſation I had with the Colonel, he has expreſſed much contrition for his late attempt."

" At its failure, I ſuppoſe."

" He entreated me to ſolicit yours and Miſs Harcourt's pardon; hoped you would think him ſufficiently puniſhed by his preſent ſufferings, and that your Grace would not contradict the ſtory he meant to tell Mrs. Campley; that, in coming to give his aſſiſtance at the inſtant you fired your piſtol, he had received its contents, inſtead of the robber at whom it was aimed. This account would gain credit for your returning with him to Hounſlow, and my attention in bringing a ſurgeon to dreſs his wounds."

The Dutcheſs, laughing, ſaid, " I ſee there is no fear of my conſcience being burdened with the death of Campley, while he is able to plan ſo artful and ſpecious a ſtory to cover his villany, by making it be ſuppoſed, that he was aſſiſting the oppreſſed, inſtead of outraging all laws human and divine. There

is

is not the leaſt doubt but that he will live to fill up the meaſure of his evil deeds; therefore you may inform him, Marquis, that he may tell the tale in his own way, provided he pledges his honour to you, that he will not, in future, attempt to moleſt Miſs Harcourt, and that her name ſhould never be mentioned in this affair."

It was now agreed, that Sir Harry ſhould guard the ladies to Bramble Hall, for fear ſome of the gallant Colonel's myrmidons ſhould be hardy enough to return to the charge: they accordingly ſet out ſoon after the Marquis left them, and arrived without any more adventures, at the favourite reſidence of the Ducthеſs.

As her new title was known by the channel of the papers before ſhe appeared, they rung the bells in the towns ſhe paſſed through, by way of doing her honour: the moment ſhe was acquainted with the occaſion of theſe pealing acclamations, ſhe ſent them money

money to reward their misjudging zeal, but with poſitive orders, they ſhould directly ceaſe ſuch noiſy demonſtrations of it.

The Dutcheſs, who again began to reſpire freely in the unclouded atmoſphere of Hampſhire, glided naturally into her uſual avocations; while Ellinor, left much to herſelf in the ſilence of her dreſſing-room, had time to take a retroſpective view of the purſuits, pleaſures, and ſociety, in which ſhe had paſſed, what were to her, the pleaſanteſt weeks of her life; they now appeared, by their deprivation, to be doubly dear. She felt liſtleſs and diſpirited, could find no amuſement in thoſe employments and purſuits, in which time formerly uſed to make itſelf wings. She was abſent in company, ſighed often, eat little, ſlept leſs; in ſhort, ſhe had all the marks of a lover ſo truly and wittily deſcribed by our immortal Shakeſpeare's Roſalind.

The Dutcheſs, who had long known the cauſe of this change in her young friend, beheld its effects with pity and regret; convinced, that ambition held too powerful a ſway in the boſom of the Marquis, to be eradicated, even by the faſcinations of an Ellinor. She therefore tried to amuſe her mind, without appearing to notice the evident alteration in her manners. Ellinor's time was paſſed in melancholy walks among the leafleſs ſhrubberies, or in liſtening whole hours to a robin, who uſed to ſit and warble its little notes on an almond tree under her window; ſhe perſuaded herſelf, that it was the ſong of complaint for the loſs of its mate, and while ſhe thought, ſhe only wept in uniſon the woes of this favourite bird, her tears involuntarily flowed for her own.

By theſe debilitating avocations ſhe nouriſhed and ſoothed the paſſion that ſhe was unconſcious of feeling; the brilliant energies of her mind were loſt in languid deſpondency. The Dutcheſs determined to

rouſe her from this liſtleſs laſſitude of love, and to ſtimulate the powers of her mind to re-action, by ſhewing her the cauſes of its preſent ſtagnation.

For this purpoſe ſhe entered her dreſſing-room, whom ſhe found abſorbed in a profound reverie; the tears dropping faſt from her downcaſt eyes on her folded arms, which ſhe appeared not conſcious of ſhedding. The Dutcheſs had advanced almoſt cloſe to Ellinor before ſhe perceived her, when, ſtarting from her ſeat, her pallid cheek, that looked like a lily bathed in the dews of morning, at her appearance, aſſumed the glow of the crimſon roſe, as ſhe ſtammered out an apology for the reverie in which ſhe was loſt on her Grace's entrance.

The Dutcheſs led Ellinor to a chair, whoſe hand ſhe ſtill retained, and taking a ſeat beſide her, ſhe thus addreſt the fair invalid. "I came, my dear, thus abruptly into your room, becauſe I thought myſelf the meſſenger of glad

glad tidings; it was to acquaint you, that you muſt make an effort to throw off this *penſoroſo* humour, that you have encouraged ever ſince your return into Hampſhire, and reaſſume the *allegro*, which is your real character. I have juſt received a letter from John, who informs me, he ſhall be with us to-night. He will be quite ſhocked to ſee you look ſo diſmal; you know his motto is '*toujours gai*.'

While the Dutcheſs ſaid this, ſhe looked ſteadfaſtly in Ellinor's face; all her doubts would have been realized, if they had needed confirmation; her colour changed alternately from red to an aſhy paleneſs; her knees trembled as ſhe ſat, and ſhe appeared ready to faint. The Dutcheſs, grieved at her ſituation, brought her a glaſs of water, which after having ſwallowed, ſhe felt herſelf ſomething renovated; looking up to her face, her eyes ſuffuſed with tears, ſhe ſaid, "ah! how good you are to a poor unhappy orphan."

"If you think ſo, ſhow your gratitude, by exerting yourſelf to throw off this vile morbid melancholy, in which you have lately indulged yourſelf, by which you have infected me, and thrown a gloom over my ſpirits, that even the enlivening cry of my hounds, or the exhilarating joys of the chaſe, cannot remove."

"I muſt ever grieve, that my ſorrows ſhould have this effect on your Grace, but I really cannot tell the occaſion of my preſent ſadneſs; I think my health is affected, and my nerves weakened, by a ſucceſſion of vexatious circumſtances which have brought on this mental debility. I am now convinced the Lady Abbeſs told me truth, when ſhe ſaid I ſhould meet nothing in the world but diſappointment. Oh! that I had liſtened to the advice ſhe gave, and that I was urged to follow, by thoſe who now forſake me; happier ſhould I have been, had I never repaſſed the gates of the convent."

"I cannot, Ellinor, hear you give way to querulous complaints againſt the world, becauſe

cauſe you have not found all its inhabitants as correct as they ought to be. It is a very *good world*, formed by its Almighty Ruler for the convenience, the comfort, and pleaſure of his creatures; if, by their weakneſs or wickedneſs they do not contribute to change, what was intended as a bleſſing, into a curſe. Patient endurance of the preſent evils, or perſevering energy to oppoſe them, will give the colour to your future fortune; for believe me, my dear Ellinor, much depends on our own exertions to mitigate the calamities we cannot prevent. The philoſophic Hume was right, when he aſſerted, 'he is happy whoſe *circumſtances* ſuit his temper; but he is moſt excellent, who can ſuit his temper to *any circumſtances*.' I am well aware of the cauſe of your preſent mental pain, for however you may impoſe on yourſelf, bodily infirmity has nothing to do in the buſineſs."

"To what then does your Grace impute this enervating depreſſion, that weakens my frame, relaxes, to infantine debility, the ſtrong

texture of my ſoul, and ſhakes to its baſe the ſeat of reaſon?"

"To that power alone that can perform *all* this, and *much more*, on his devotees; who leads the conqueror of tens of thouſands, in his triumphant chains; ſoftens the rugged, renders the timid courageous, the haughty humble, the avaricious generous, who can make the philoſopher a fool, and the fool a philoſopher. To *love*, almighty *love*, you owe this alarming change of mind and manners."

"To *love*," faintly repeated Ellinor; impoſſible! your Grace cannot ſuppoſe it; for whom could I with propriety, feel that dangerous paſſion, that in my forlorn ſtate muſt conſtitute my greateſt miſery?"

"My dear child, be aſſured that I do not probe your wounds, from motives of wanton cruelty, to give you any unneceſſary pain; but to adminiſter the lenient balm of friendſhip, and aid their cure. I know you did not ſuſpect the cauſe of your diſeaſe, or that it lay in your mind; for under the ſpecious form

of

of friendſhip, the ſly traitor has ſtolen into your heart."

Ellinor, to whom the conviction that ſhe meant the Marquis, now *firſt* ocourred, bluſhed deeply; ſhe ſaw at once the dreaded truth, and the hopeleſsneſs of her ſituation, ſhe threw herſelf at the feet of the Dutcheſs, hiding her face covered with conſcious ſhame, and her eyes drowned in tears in her lap, while ſhe entreated pardon for her temerity, and proteſted that ſhe was not conſcious of the extent of her folly, till her Grace had drawn off the veil that hid her from herſelf. She now thanked her a thouſand times, for all her wondrous kindneſs, after having diſcovered what ſhe muſt juſtly think, an unpardonable preſumption in the creature of her bounty, daring to look up to, and love her ſon; for had ſhe not, inſtead of driving her from her preſence with merited ignominy, condeſcended to comfort, and reaſſure her.

"Your Grace may depend upon it, that you ſhall not in future have occaſion to bluſh for my imprudence, or commiſerate my weakneſs; I will call forth the natural powers of my mind, that have been ſo long ſpell-bound by the force of this deſtructive paſſion. I will drive it from my boſom, or die in the attempt. I will yet prove myſelf worthy the place in your eſteem, that you have hitherto honoured me with. To do this effectually, I muſt tear myſelf from your protection, and once more become a wanderer, for to live in the conſtant habits of hearing the dulcet ſounds of his voice; beholding daily the inſinuating charms of the firſt man who ever made my heart feel a pang, and ſo ſituated to conquer the paſſion he had created, would be impoſſible; it would be next to madneſs.—No, I will fly from the too dangerous Marquis, and when he has ſelected a lady fitted to fill the high ſtation of his wife, then will the humble Ellinor return, and dedicate the remainder of her days

days to that gratitude, love and eſteem, ſhe owes to the Ducheſs of Dreadnought."

Her Grace embracing her, replied, "It is not from me, Ellinor, the objection will ariſe to your being my daughter: I already feel for you the affection of a mother; I know your merits, and have long loved you with parental tenderneſs; was Fearleſs to ſolicit my conſent, I ſhould grant it, for while I revere you for your preſent ſtruggles, I commiſerate the agony that rends your heart. I ſincerely feel for you, convinced that all the misfortunes of *my* life aroſe from the ambition of my parents, who compelled me to break my plighted faith to the man of my early choice, and ſacrificed his happineſs and my own, for a title that I deſpiſed, and for wealth which I did not want. I do not mean to aſſert, I ever felt ſo keenly the diſappointment of my hopes, as you and many others would have done, in a ſimilar ſituation. My perſon more robuſt, my purſuits leſs enervating, my mind was ſtronger, I had a greater

command over my feelings, than can be expected from thoſe who have nurſed the ſenſibilities given them for the benefit of humanity, till they become conſtitutional weakneſſes.

"I have already told you, that it is not *me* that will ſtand between you and happineſs. I will candidly inform you, that I fear your diſappointment will ariſe from the Marquis; he has vanity and ambition; to the gratification of thoſe paſſions, he will moſt probably ſacrifice the ſofter feelings of his breaſt, that otherwiſe might lead him to ſeek domeſtic felicity with the woman of his affections. I hinted to you before, that on hearing the late Duke's addreſs to him, on his future eſtabliſhment, I ſaw clearly his ſtimulative to matrimony would be riches and honours. A converſation we have lately had on this ſubject, has confirmed thoſe ideas. I have no doubt but that your various charms and accompliſhments have made an impreſſion on his heart, but I fear it is not powerful enough to induce him to overlook the ſecrecy that attends your birth and connexions. I am fearful, that

with

with thoſe ariſtocratical notions which were early infuſed into his mind, on the neceſſity of not permitting his high blood to degenerate, by forming an unequal alliance, and your origin not being known, he will ſhrink from giving a plebeian mother to his princely race.

"In my idea, honourable conduct, worth, and merit, alone conſtitute *true* nobility. I deſpiſe the baſe policy, and ſordid motives that can induce a reaſoning mortal to ſacrifice on the altar of ambition, what would conſtitute his happineſs, to pride, pomp, and pageantry. Yet this, if I am not much miſtaken in the knowledge of his heart, will be the conduct that Fearleſs will purſue. I have, my dear Ellinor, been thus explicit, that you may now make thoſe exertions of which I know your mind capable, to conquer this unfortunate attachment, that with his preſent ſentiments I think the object unworthy of exciting."

Ellinor, whoſe pride was alarmed by what the Dutcheſs had juſt addreſſed to her, felt her face and neck glow, as the conſcious dignity of her native feelings again returned to her heart, and the film that had blinded her judgment, diſappeared from her eyes. She thanked the Dutcheſs for her reiterated kindneſs; and ſaid, with ſuch an example of goodneſs and fortitude, as her Grace, ſhe ſhould be inexcuſable not to conquer a weakneſs, that it was the height of preſumption for her ever to have harboured in her boſom; though, after what ſhe had juſt heard of the ſentiments of the Marquis, ſhe ſhould feel herſelf degraded, if ſhe ſtill continued to feel a paſſion for him.

She now aroſe, telling the Dutcheſs ſhe was going to take herſelf to taſk, and to determine how ſhe ought to act; "but your Grace may be aſſured, that however fate may diſpoſe of my perſon, my heart will be ever with you, that my gratitude for your unexampled treatment, and my admiration for the greatneſs of your character, will be planted thoſe indelibly."

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

THE honourable Colonel Campley mended faſt, after the Ducheſs left Hounſlow, and was ſoon able to be removed to Portman-Square. He had ſent for his wife, and perſuaded her, he had received his wound in the moſt honourable of all cauſes, that of protecting the ladies. This would have paſſed current, had not his old engines of plaguing others, the morning papers, been now turned againſt himſelf, and filled with ſatirical paragraphs, and oblique hints to torment him; ſuch as, " We hear an honouroble Colonel, of gallant notoriety, was laſt night ſhot through the body, on Hounſlow Heath, by a daſhing Dutcheſs, well known for taking a ſure aim; the cauſe was an attempt to carry off,

off, by force, a frail fair one, whom her Grace had taken under her protection."

"The gentleman alluded to in the above paragraph, is the ſame whoſe nuptials with a *rich* city heireſs, we had the honour to announce ſome months ſince."

The knowledge of the real cauſe of the quarrel, was gathered from the tattling of the Dutcheſs's ſervants, on their return to the inn. It afforded a pleaſant ſource of amuſement to the lovers of ſcandal, and many viſits of condolence to Mrs. Campley; who was obliged to endure the mortification of the ironical and provoking pity of her newly acquired faſhionable friends, for the *loſs* of the Colonel's affections. Among her viſitors, none felt more chagrin than Lady Fanny Oſwald, at Campley's perſevering attachment to Ellinor; ſhe as uſual eaſed her ſpleen, by transferring a part of it to her dear Mrs. Campley, conſtantly reminding her, what a ſhocking thing

thing it was, and how much her caſe was to be deplored, in being united to a man whoſe conduct had ſhown, he married her only from intereſted motives, that he might be enabled to laviſh her fortune, to ſupport in ſplendour his beauteous Ellinor. By ſuch *friendly* conſolations, poor Mrs. Campley was *comforted* into a ſtate of *deſperation*, though ſhe was confined to her houſe from motives of propriety, till the Colonel was pronounced convaleſcent. None of the ſcandalous additions to the ſtory, that were invented by the wicked, liſtened to by the curious, and circulated by the idle, but were repreſented to her. Not a newſpaper that had a paragraph concerning it, that was not ſent for her peruſal, by ſome of her very *good-natured* friends.

We will now leave the huſband to his bodily pain, and the wife to her mental ſufferings, embittered by the commiſeration of her female acquaintance, to account for the cauſe of *both*.

After

After Ellinor had met Campley in the park, ſhe had carefully avoided a ſecond *rencontre*. In vain he kept ſpies conſtantly to watch her actions; in vain he wrote letters that through the manœuvres of his jackal Le Neuf, he hoped would meet her eye. This gentleman was ordered to make love to the ignorant Bloſſom, by whom theſe epiſtles were laid on her dreſſing table; no ſooner were they perceived by Ellinor, than ſhe ſeverely reprimanded this emiſſary of the artful valet; aſſuring her, that if ſhe did not immediately return them to her employer, and ſolemnly promiſe never to repeat the offence, ſhe would directly acquaint her lady with the impropriety of her behaviour, by which ſhe would forfeit her protection for ever.

Bloſſom prayed for pardon, and promiſed amendment; but in her heart ſhe never forgave Ellinor, for obliging her to forego what ſhe looked upon as her perquiſites of office, the adulation of the valets, and the bribes of their maſters;

maſters; both of which were found neceſſary by this ruſtic coquet, who loved flattery and finery as well as her betters.

Betſy Bloſſom, the daughter of one of the deer-keepers of the New Foreſt, was born in a cottage, and brought up with no companions but her father's four-footed wards; ſhe was nearly in as *al freſco* a ſituation as themſelves, till taken into Lady John's family; who one day as ſhe was riding, met the blooming little ſavage, bounding over the underwood in purſuit of a tame fawn, who in ſportive gambols eluded her embrace. Her ladyſhip, who always loved the appearance of rude health, was ſtruck with the well-formed limbs, elaſtic motions, ſparkling eyes, and richly bronzed cheek, through which glowed the animated carmine of nature in this wild foreſter.

She ſought her father, and propoſed to him to take his daughter home with her; he

he accepted the offer with joy and gratitude. Lady John obſerved, "you muſt not expect, my good man, that I am going to adopt the girl, and bring her up as a fine lady; no, my intention is, ſhe ſhall be taught to read, write, and work, enough of each to render her a uſeful ſervant. It would be an injury, not a benefit, to take her from the ſphere in which ſhe was born to move."

Betſy, brought up under the tuition of the houſekeeper, by eaſy gradations arrived at the envied preeminence of being *own* woman to the Dutcheſs. Thoſe ſeeds of vanity and coquetry, which were the natural inmates, but had hitherto lain dormant in the boſom of this ruſtic deity, or only ſhown themſelves in the arrangement of the ſhining calico gown and pink top knot, or by dancing at a harveſt home with ſome of the fawns and dryads of the foreſt, to vex and mortify Mr. John the butler, whoſe heart ſhe had long held in chains, whom ſhe was as deſirous to teaſe and torment as the reigning toaſt

toaſt of the moſt faſhionable circle could be; now when her powerful charms were brought forth on the canvas, by the flattering pencils of the Duke of Southernwood's and Colonel Campley's *gentlemen*, aided by the offered purſes of their maſters, that would enable her to procure ornaments to decorate her handſome perſon, theſe embryo paſſions were arouſed into action; and a few weeks reſidence in that hot-bed of folly, the metropolis, had brought them to maturity. Her head was quite turned; to dreſs, talk, and walk, like the Londoners, was all that now employed her thoughts.

With ſuch an emiſſary, Campley promiſed himſelf ſucceſs; for though his letters had been returned unopened, and it was impoſſible to procure an interview with Ellinor; as ſhe never walked or rode out, unleſs accompanied by Lady John, or her ſon; who, with his rank, fortune, and perſon, he looked upon as a formidable rival, and hated accordingly. He knew Bloſſom's love of gold

gold, and that by a well-timed application of the ſhining metal, he ſhould gain at once a ſpy and a friend in the citadel. Le Neuf was therefore given unlimited credit on his purſe, to diſpoſe of it as circumſtances ſhould juſtify.

The reſult was, the Colonel's being made acquainted with all the movemens of the family, to which was ſuperadded the private converſation, (through liſtening, the old medium of abigail information,) that we have before recounted as having paſſed between Ellinor and Lady John, on the ſubject of her ſon's views; from which, through all the diſadvantages it experienced from a heterogeneous mixture of language, the ignorance of the reciter, and the breaks the ſtory ſuffered from Bloſſom's terrors of detection in her nefarious employment, Campley plainly gathered he had nothing to fear from the idea Ellinor's being a *Dutcheſs*.

He was convinced ſhe was in love with Dareall;

Dareall; and that he had no objection to live life of freedom with her, was equally palpable. In this junction, he foreſaw a total overthrow of all his long planned artifices, and the deſtruction of the villainous ſchemes laid by him to get Ellinor into his power. He perceived in Dareall, one both able and willing to diſpute the prize with him, one that openly he could have no chance of ſupplanting, who had youth, a fine perſon, rank, and fortune to lay at her feet; that by conſtantly being with her, had inſinuated himſelf into her heart.

This, the artful Campley well knew, would be more eſſential towards gaining poſſeſſion of Ellinor, than all his other advantages; for a woman rejects with conſcious dignity, and cold diſdain, the moſt flattering and ſplendid offers of the man that is *indifferent* to her; but hard is the ſtruggle, and doubtful the conqueſt, of her whoſe boſom beats with the *ſoft paſſion*; it extenuates the faults of the offender, and pleads powerfully for the man ſhe loves, through the maſk of diſintereſted affection

ſhe

ſhe ſees not the ſelfiſh ſeducer, till fallen into the ſnares laid for her innocence.

Campley having taken his reſolutions with promptitude, ſet about executing them with alacrity; determined, that "as to go back would be as tedious as to go on," to make a bold attempt to get Ellinor into his power. He was too vain of his perſon and talents, to ſuppoſe that either would fail of their effect, when he had conſtant opportunities of diſplaying them to advantage. To procure this, he laid the plan of ſeizing Ellinor in her journey to Hampſhire, of which he was informed by the blooming Bloſſom; but he thought himſelf too great a general to make a confidant of his ſpy; of courſe ſhe was as much ſurpriſed and frightened as the reſt of the party.

He had ſent a creature of his own, to get himſelf hired as a helper to the coachman. This fellow had received orders to draw the charges of the ſervants piſtols; thoſe of the Dutcheſs were always kept in her

bed-chamber, and Bloſſom being ignorant of the intended attack, had not thought it neceſſary to acquaint him that her Grace uſually travelled with fire-arms; when too late, it proved to Campley the folly of making *half* confidences, which occaſioned the failure of this deep laid ſcheme, and nearly loſt him his life; for had he not been lifting Ellinor on the horſe at the very moment he received the ball in his arm, ſo well had the Dutcheſs taken her aim, it muſt have gone through his plotting brain, and we ſhould have had no more to write, nor the world to read, of the gallant Colonel Campley's adventures.

He had a chaiſe waiting near the ſpot of the *rencontre*, which was to have received him and Ellinor, while his aſſociates covered the retreat of their redoubtable commander and his fair companion, whom he meant to convey to a ſecluded houſe prepared for her reception, near Norwood; where ſhe was to be placed under the guardianſhip of a lady, who had often been uſeful to the Colonel

nel and his friends, in similar situations. One who, in her youthful days, had sacrificed *all* for love, and thought the world *well* lost. She had long known the value of gold; for a certain portion of it, she now condescended to aid that cause, by her assistance and counsels, that her charms could no longer support.

How our heroine was preserved from falling into the hands of such a detestable character, and the whole scheme rendered abortive, has been already shewn. We will quit the Colonel for the present, and leave him to united punishment of bodily and mental pangs, not able to escape from the surfeiting fondness of his wife, to recal his roving heart, or her clamorous complaints at his ingratitude, when he received her caresses in sullen silence, or turned from them with cold contempt.

CHAP. XII.

ELLINOR, whom we left to take counſel of her heart, and to taſk its behaviour towards the Marquis, had brought it ſo farunder the ſubordination of pride and prudence, that ſhe was enabled to meet him on his arrival, with ſomething like cheerful compoſure; for which ſhe received a nod, and a ſmile of approbation from the Dutcheſs. The Marquis, after having embraced his mother, kiſſed the hand of Ellinor with much gallantry, expreſſed his happineſs at ſeeing the roſes of health reſtored to her face, and pleaſure beaming in her bright eyes.

The laſt ſcenes of mortality, in which he had ſo lately been an actor, added to his ſable habiliments, gave a penſive ſhade to his fine features, infuſed a tenderneſs into his beha-

viour, and attuned his naturally mellifluous voice into a ſoftened tone, that fell upon the ear, and melted the ſoul of Ellinor to love and admiration; while he in ſtolen glances, "looked unutterable things," his boſom heaved with ſoft ſighs, and her heart beat reſponſive.

The Dutcheſs, whoſe keen eyes had obſerved all this, called on the Marquis to ſit down with her to cheſs. This gave Ellinor an opportunity to retire to her own room, where ſhe relieved her full heart by a flood of tears, convinced ſhe had expoſed to the Marquis her predilection for him, and to the Dutcheſs that her preſumptuous paſſion was incurable, that all her well-formed reſolutions vaniſhed the inſtant ſhe was expoſed to ſee her irreſiſtible ſon. She more than ever ſaw the neceſſity of flying from his faſcinations; but ſhe wanted ſufficient courage to doom herſelf to miſery; then again ſhe felt inclined to indulge the flatterer *Hope*. Might ſhe not at ſome future period be acknowledged by her parents? perhaps by birth

ſhe

ſhe was not unworthy of the alliance of the Marquis; or as his mother did not oppoſe his choice, if he loved her, he might be induced to overlook the wide diſtance at preſent placed between them. When ſhe reverted to the information of the Dutcheſs, of his ambitious views, his worldly prudence, his promiſe given to the late Duke, that he would implicitly adhere to his advice in the choice of a wife; the pleaſing viſion vaniſhed. Doubt, Diſtruſt, Deſpair, with their conſtant companion, pining Melancholy, again reaſſumed their places in her boſom. Thus loſt in thought, pondering on the paſt, and trembling for the future, was Ellinor, when ſhe received a ſummons to ſupper.

On her entrance, ſhe found the company increaſed, by the arrival of the vicar, to pay his compliments to the Marquis; that ſagacious gentleman having ſcented out a good living, and a ſickly incumbent on his Yorkſhire eſtate. The Marquis was ſoliciting the Dutcheſs to accompany him on his return to London, and to be his gueſt in

Groſvenor-ſquare; "at leaſt, my dear mother, let me prevail on you to make my houſe your winter reſidence, till I can induce one of my fair country women to become its miſtreſs."

"My dear John, I know not how to practiſe the virtue of ſelf-denial, ſo far as to refuſe myſelf the pleaſure of enjoying the ſociety of a beloved ſon, of which I have been ſo long deprived. You know I hate London, and am neither fitted by education nor inclination to conform to unmeaning ceremony. My character is too decided and energetic to compliment the knaves and fools I deſpiſe: my nerves have too much of the rigidity of my hardy progenitors, the bold Barons, who procured freedom and Magna Charta to their country, to bend to courtly etiquette, or ſycophantic adulation. I know that, brought up in the great world, and accuſtomed to its uſages, you think differently on this ſubject. Left ſole maſter of your own actions, at an age to judge for yourſelf, far be from me the wiſh to check your propenſities, or to loſe the friend in the

ſon

ſon by parental trammels, dictatorial documents, or inquiſitorial ſpies upon your conduct, pleaſures, and purſuits.

"You ſay, Marquis, that my company is neceſſary to form a part of thoſe pleaſures that I hope await you, therefore I conſent to return for a few weeks to the denſe atmoſphere of the metropolis, juſt to ſee you in the full poſſeſſion of your newly acquired fortune and honours."

"Thanks, my deareſt mother, you know not how happy your kind condeſcenſion has made me."

"But I ſhall take up my reſidence in Park-lane,—my avocations and purſuits differ from your's; my firſt gratification ariſes from perfect freedom, which I cannot experience in any houſe but my *own*. You may paſs as much of your time with me as is perfectly agreeable to yourſelf; come without ceremony, and depart without apology. I ever deteſted reſtraint, and ſhall therefore never lay you under any; it is the *opiate* of ſociety, and the grave of affection.

"In

"In reſpect to your eſtabliſhment, your late uncle recommended you to keep his old ſervants in their former ſituations, as he found them honeſt and faithful; you cannot therefore do better than accede to his requeſt, till you give me a daughter, who will then arrange to her own taſte, what ſhe may find amiſs."

The Marquis, finding he could not prevail with the Dutcheſs to occupy his houſe, joyfully acceded to her plan, happy at all events to have induced her to return to the capital. He loved his mother with the moſt tender affection, reſpected her virtues, admired the ſtrength of her underſtanding, the perſpicuity of her judgment, her forcible oratory, and her brilliant wit; but there were moments when he ſhrunk from her powers of diſcrimination, his eye fell under thoſe glances of enquiry, ſhot with ſuch ſparkling intelligence from her's, that appeared to have power to read his inmoſt ſoul, and inveſtigate its hidden purpoſes.

When

When Ellinor attended the Dutcheſs to her dreſſing-room, ſhe commended the ſtruggle ſhe had made, and ſaid, that her well-meant exertions would ultimately conquer; intreated her not to fly a danger that was by no means ſo terrible as her relaxed nerves had led her to believe; told her that a diſeaſe was more than half cured when its cauſes were aſcertained; ſaid, on Ellinor's account, more than her own, that the lambent flame might not be fed by conſtant intercourſe with the object that had kindled it, or give her enemies cauſe for ſarcaſtic animadverſions, ſhe had refuſed going to Groſvenor-Square: therefore deſired, that ſhe would not reſolve raſhly, but wait the event of their London viſit; then, if ſhe found ſhe could not be happy to remain in her family, ſhe would no longer oppoſe her leaving it, as ſoon as ſhe had found her a proper ſituation.

Ellinor was eaſily perſuaded to yield to the requeſt of the Dutcheſs, to aid which there was a powerful *pleader* in her heart,

though her cooler conſideration ſtill whiſpered, that her only ſafety was in flight.

After the week paſſed, by the Marquis at Bramble-Hall, he accompanied his mother and Ellinor to town; of the latter, as the heroine of our tale, we grieve that *truth* obliges us to ſay, ſhe had made no advances towards conquering that paſſion, that was at once the torment and pleaſure of her exiſtence. She had lately blinded her judgment, and lulled herſelf into a ſtate of ſecurity, by indulging that moſt fallacious and dangerous of all ideas to a young woman in love, that ſhe might allow herſelf, with propriety and honour, to cheriſh a *Platonic* friendſhip for the Marquis, to admire and eſteem him as a brother.

This Utopian ſyſtem has helped to aid the cauſe of libertiniſm, and ruined more females by the inſidious lures it holds forth, than any other means employed by the votaries of ſeduction to deceive and deſtroy that ſex they

they were born to protect. We earneſtly recommend to our fair readers, inſtantly to fly the object of their choice, who tries to ſap their innocence, and lull caution aſleep, by painting a fancied ſecurity; "let not ſuch a man be truſted;" ſhun the *Platonic torpedo* as a *covert enemy*, ever to be dreaded, who, while he numbs the ſenſations of nature, his unſuſpecting victim becomes an eaſy prey to his machinations.

Ellinor depending on the fancied power that ſhe perſuaded herſelf ſhe poſſeſſed over her heart, ſince ſhe had been a diſciple of the *Platonic* ſchool of the Marquis, indulged herſelf, without reſtraint, in all the innocent avocations and amuſements in his ſociety, that had afforded her ſo much pleaſure in the early ſtage of their acquaintance. While ſhe thus ſtrewed the path with flowers, whoſe perfume charmed her ſenſes, and whoſe colour delighted her eyes, ſhe was not conſcious that it led her feet to the brink of that volcano, that might, in one direful moment, engulph all her preſent happineſs,

and future hopes. In theſe deluſions of the heart, paſſed on the time with Ellinor.

Not ſo with the Marquis; he ſaw *his* way, and prepared to avail himſelf of her partiality, for he had long obſerved with pleaſure, that it every day increaſed. From what has already been developed of his character, the ſagacious reader has undoubtedly not been led to expect a faultleſs monſter. There were certain portions of good and evil, ſo equally blended in his compoſition, that they could not be diſunited; for though ſometimes impelled by the former into great and worthy purſuits, he was as often ſunk by the latter to the moſt debaſing vices.

In early youth, committed to the care of a grandfather, who doated on his perſon, and who could ſee no faults in his behaviour, looking forward to him as the hope of his houſe, in whom it would again flouriſh in all its ancient ſplendour; he amuſed his decline of life with picturing to himſelf a long

long line of deſcendants, adding new honours to thoſe that were hereditary, by their wiſdom in council, and their valorous exploits againſt the enemies of their king and country.

To realize theſe illuſions, the old Duke thought no indulgence too great that could be ſhewn that dear grandſon, from whom ſo much was expected; who was early inſtructed, that he was to ſupport the dignity of his illuſtrious anceſtors; never to forget his preſent conſequence, and future proſpects, by deſcending to form *plebeian* connexions, male or female; that with his perſon, fortune, and rank, he might look forward to the moſt ſplendid alliances in the kingdom; that he would be ſought and careſſed by noblemen of the firſt diſtinction, as a proper match for their daughters; that beauties would ſigh for his love, and honours court his acceptance; that being the *laſt* of his race, it was more particularly incumbent on him not to let it degenerate, by mixing his pure blood with thoſe that traced their's only from an origin of yeſterday.

Theſe were the leſſons given him by his grandfather for his domeſtic eſtabliſhment; his political creed was more conciſe:—it was, always to aid the ariſtocratical part of the conſtitution, by throwing his whole weight into the ſcale, to ſupport the miniſter right or wrong, becauſe he and his family had done ſo, and monarchy muſt be ſupported by its ſurrounding ſatellites!

Our young Marquis found theſe inſtructions very eaſy, and there could be but little doubt of his putting them in practice to the extent of the letter, whenever occaſion ſerved. He had pride, ambition, vanity, and ſelf-love, to aid theſe delectable documents; added to which, he was wary, ſpecious, and inſinuating. Theſe arts were the more dangerous, becauſe he could veil them, by aſſuming the appearance of careleſs vivacity, and open candour. Viewed on the bright ſide of his character, he was generous, humane, and good-natured; to theſe qualities were annexed perſonal courage.

Of

Of his acquirements we have little to ſay—they were more brilliant than ſolid; he was educated to be a future Duke, he did not think it neceſſary to be a profound ſcholar, he rode, fenced, and danced *á la merveille*, ſpoke French and Italian fluently, could draw prettily, accompany a ſong with his violin decently, and get through his part in a quartet party with tolerable preciſion. He had made the tour of Europe, by which he had acquired a happy knack of giving a decided opinion, in technical terms, on the works of the old maſters; this had gained him the character of a *connoiſſeur*, and a lover of *virtû*, and he was looked up to as a patroniſer of the arts, by their profeſſors.

At the death of his grandfather, the late Duke returned to England, and ſoon became very fond of his nephew, whom he ſent to travel, with a ſplendid appointment, an unlimited credit on his banker, and at his death, as we have ſeen, left him a large fortune, that

that rendered the Marquis totally independent of his father, who had now wholly given himſelf up to the trifling and frivolous purſuits that had engroſſed the early part of his life. He was with difficulty dragged forth from the inmoſt receſſes of his muſeum, to take poſſeſſion of his new honours and fortune; and when preſented to the world, from whoſe cuſtoms he had been ſo long eſtranged, he appeared as great an object of curioſity to the multitude, as any thing in his own collection.

CHAP. XIII.

THE effect this all-conquering Marquis, (ſo gifted by nature, ſo poliſhed by education,) had upon the ſuſceptible heart of our heroine, can raiſe no wonder. It remains to elucidate what were the ſenſations her charms excited in his breaſt. He was an admirer of beauty, loved the ſex, and purſued them as an amuſement, a relaxation in the interregnum of more weighty concerns; but love with him was but a *ſecondary* purſuit—ambition was the *firſt*; aſpiring to fill the firſt offices in the ſtate, he ſought connexions with thoſe neareſt the throne, who could beſt aid thoſe views; determined when he married, it ſhould be to ſome courtly dame who could reckon as many quarterings on her

her ſhield, as he had on his own. In the boſom of this proud noble, no thought ever entered of *marrying* the humble companion of his mother, the unacknowledged Ellinor; who, moſt likely, was the produce of an illicit intercourſe between a parſon and his houſekeeper, or ſome ſtale virgin and her favourite footman. This, or ſomething as bad, muſt be the occaſion of her birth being kept ſo profound a ſecret; for had her parents been people of faſhion, they would, from their ſituation, have been placed *above* the world's cenſure, and could have no motives for not owning her. This convinced him, that ſhe ſprung from a race, from which it would be derogatory in him to take a wife.

When firſt he ſaw Ellinor, he was ſtruck with her perſonal charms, and as, on a further acquaintance, the beauties of her mind were developed, they claimed his admiration in deſpite of worldly prudence; he felt ſenſations thrill through his heart, when in her ſociety, more painfully poignant than he had ever

ever before experienced for any of the lovely ſex. He found that ſhe was become neceſſary to *his* happineſs, and ſoon formed the reſolution to render himſelf agreeable to *her*; long before the ſecret of her love was divulged to herſelf, it was known to him. He ſaw that the blind God had taken ſure aim, and transfixed the heart of Ellinor, with one of his ſharpeſt arrows. To make ſure of this ſo much deſired conqueſt, he called forth the whole of his attractions, practiſed all his leſſons of diſſimulation, to faſcinate her, and charm aſleep the active and vigilant mind of the Dutcheſs, whoſe knowledge of the human mind, ſcrutinizing looks, and forcible language, he equally dreaded to encounter, conſcious that his views and intentions were diametrically oppoſite to her's.

The Marquis, whoſe vanity was inflated by his former ſucceſſes with women, allowed himſelf not to doubt but that Ellinor was ſo much attached, ſhe would accept him on his

his own terms. Generous to profuſion, he determined to make her ſuch offers for her future eſtabliſhment, that ſhould draw the ſigh of envy from the breaſt of prudery, when it viewed the ſplendour of her appointment. To gratify his own pride, he reſolved that the equipage of his charming miſtreſs ſhould be the moſt ſuperb, her houſe the moſt elegant, her diamonds the moſt brilliant of any woman's in London; ſhe ſhould have every thing execept the *title* of Marchioneſs—that he did not ſuppoſe ſhe could flatter her vanity with the expectation of ever obtaining.

He had arranged all theſe matters perfectly to his *own* ſatisfaction at the period of the Duke's death, and when he promiſed to make the Dutcheſs a viſit at Bramble Hall, on his return from attending his uncle's funeral, he thought in the ſolitudes of that gothic pile, he ſhould find an opportunity to pour out his paſſion at the feet of his fair enſlaver, and be enabled to prevail on her to accept from him united the delights of love and fortune.

The

The converſation that the Dutcheſs had held with him at Hounſlow, when ſhe recounted Ellinor's ſtory, her pointed addreſs to his feelings, when ſpeaking of her defenceleſs ſituation, her denunciation againſt him, if he ever dared to inſult a woman, with an improper offer, while protected by her; then it was he clearly perceived that neither his predeliction in favour of her young friend, or his intentions were concealed from the Argus eyes of the Dutcheſs. His fine ſpun web was deſtroyed, and his hopes were nearly annihilated; he loved his mother too ſincerely to draw down upon himſelf her everlaſting diſpleaſure, even for the complete gratification of his favourite paſſion. He gathered from the diſcourſe of the Dutcheſs, that, if ſolicited, ſhe would not *refuſe* her conſent to his marrying Ellinor, but nothing was farther from his thoughts than making ſuch a requeſt,—to cruſh in the bud, juſt as they were arrived at maturity, all his long-planned ſchemes of aggrandizement, to deſtroy at once

once his ambitious hopes, and be contented to retire to his country reſidence, and calmly vegetate through life, becauſe he could not withſtand the powerful faſcinations of a pair of bright eyes, whoſe equals, he thought, might poſſibly be found in a head, where the body was not held ſacred, and who might be induced to prefer the ſubſtantial enjoyment he could offer, to the airy bubble of reputation, which is often loſt by the very means uſed for its preſervation. Theſe reflections determined him not to ſhackle himſelf with the galling chains of matrimony, to which he had a perfect antipathy, without it was to anſwer thoſe purpoſes that could alone exculpate a man of ſenſe, in his judgment, for wearing them at all.

This ſubject employed his reveries, in his ſolemn viſit to the mauſoleum of his illuſtrious anceſtors, and he came to the determination to give up all thoughts of Ellinor. But when he deſcended into the family vault, and ſaw the laſt inſigna of their pompous greatneſs

greatneſs—the velvet pall, the embroidered coronet, the boaſted pride of heraldic honours, the blazoned eſcutcheons that decked their hearſe, hanging round the ſad mementos of departed greatneſs, now become the prey of worms, or the more ſure devourer Time, ſhaking in the wind, or mouldering into duſt, forming one common maſs with the puiſſant princes, whoſe armorial bearings they were meant to eterniſe; he ſhuddered at the humiliating view, and felt for a moment the folly of ambition, as he reflected, that, like them, he was but mortal.

Thus moralizing, as he beheld with diſguſt the tinſel fragments that ſtrewed the pavement of this *laſt* inheritance of his illuſtrious proginitors, he reflected on the mortifying idea, that in a *few* years, perhaps months, he might be depoſited by their ſide; then it would be of no real conſequence, whether the gilded trappings that covered his coffin, and were conſigned to rot and crumble into duſt, with the *proud* tenant of the tomb, received another ducal quartering, from his forming

forming a ſplendid matrimonial connexion, or his corpſe was embalmed by the tears of genuine affection from the bright eyes of the unaſſuming Ellinor.

While the Marquis was thus mortified by theſe reflections upon departed greatneſs, he felt humble and rational, and had the fair Ellinor been in the church to receive him, as he aſcended, we have little doubt but he would have offered her his hand, led her to the altar, and with pleaſure have received the nuptial benediction from the prieſt who had juſt before read the laſt offices over the remains of the late Duke.

As ſoon as he had loſt *ſight* of what called forth his morality, and his chaiſe rolled rapidly on, his uſual ſpirits returned, and with them, that *foe* to Love, *Ambition*. By the time he arrived in London, he had got rid of his gloomy ideas, and obſolete notions, though he did not find it ſo eaſy to divert his mind from the beauties of Ellinor, who

if

if ſhe had not gained his *heart*, had moſt undoubtedly taken ſtrong poſſeſſion of his *fancy*. This ſenſation, like many of his contemporaries, he miſtook for love, and dignified it by giving it that apellation. He determined to make his mother a viſit at Bramble Hall, and try his fortune with this delectable girl; he was ſtrengthened in his reſolution, by a viſit he made one morning to Campley, that he might be able to judge of the ſtate of his health, and report its progreſs to the Dutcheſs.

He found the invalid in his lady's dreſſing-room, reclining on a blue ſatin ſofa, looking moſt languiſhingly intereſting. Mrs. Campley ſat at a table making a *fillagree* dreſſing-box, while a very charming woman was placed at the end of the ſettee, who was reading, at his entrance, Mrs. Robinſon's beautiful poem, "*To him who can underſtand it.*" She was introduced to the Marquis as Lady Fanny Oſwald. She was going to throw by her book, when he requeſted, he might not interrupt the pleaſure of the company,

but be allowed to partake of it, entreating her to proceed; ſhe complied. After the Marquis had admired the correctneſs of the verſe, the beauty of the imagery, and elegance of the compoſition, and having complimented her Ladyſhip on the juſtice ſhe did the author by her emphatic *manner* of reading it, the converſation turned on his journey into the country, which the Colonel wondered he ſhould think of taking at that dreary ſeaſon.

"But the *cauſe*, Campley," exclaimed Lady Fanny, with an ironical ſneer; "can you be ſurpriſed at any thing ſuch a *cauſe* can produce; you, who have ſo lately ſmarted from its *effects?*"

"Your Ladyſhip talks ſo enigmatically, that I profeſs I am perfectly at a loſs to underſtand your meaning," replied the Marquis.

"I ſuppoſed I was perfectly intelligible, without naming a perſonage that muſt always give a ſhock to the delicate nerves of my very *dear friend* Mrs. Campley; though if ſhe excuſes

excuſes me, I will relate what I heard at Lady Torpedo's *converſazione*, which will at once ſolve the riddle."

"Oh! I can aſſure your Ladyſhip, I am perfectly indifferent to any thing that can be ſaid about the deſpicable creature to whom you allude; I feel too much contempt for the object, for her to excite my anger."

"Well, then, thus it was: The Dutcheſs of Matchem, avowed, that the neweſt and moſt wonderful piece of intelligence ſhe could communicate for the amuſement of the company, was, that the little adventurer that had, by a ſtrange combination of circumſtances, contrived to make no ſmall buſtle lately in the great world, was ſoon to become a Marchioneſs; that the Dutcheſs of Dreadnought had retired with her into the country, where the nuptials were to be performed, as ſoon as decency would permit, after the late Duke's death.

While Lady Fanny repeated this, ſhe fixed her eyes on the Marquis, who coloured

from pride, and bit his lips with vexation; ſhe added, laughing, "you look very angry, but remember you would not take a *hint*."

"Not I upon my ſoul; I think they do me too much honour to match me with ſo beautiful and accompliſhed a young woman as Miſs Harcourt, for whom I have a very high reſpect, as the *friend* and *companion* of my mother; but to her I never had the ſlighteſt idea of offering my hand."

"This I ſaid, and aſſured the Dutcheſs that it was impoſſible you could ſo far forget what you owed yourſelf and family, as to marry a perſonage unacknowledged; without fortune, friends, or character; that, there was every reaſon to ſuppoſe, had an intrigue with Sir James Lavington; and who was diſcovered in a ſituation by no means *doubtful*, with a man of profeſſed gallantry; (here ſhe ſmiled at the Colonel) and, after having been turned out of Sir James's houſe for theſe naughty tricks, to the great aſtoniſhment of all the world, by way of keeping up her character for *peculiarity*, the Dutcheſs of Dreadnought

nought took her under her protection; how then can you wonder if the public gives her to you as a *wife*?"

The Marquis could not bear to hear a ſyllable uttered againſt his mother, who he thought was an honour to her ſex; whoſe every action aroſe from a heart replete with goodneſs; nor did he believe one word againſt the rectitude and virtue of Ellinor. He therefore replied to her acrimonious Ladyſhip, "That the motives that had induced the Dutcheſs to receive Miſs Harcourt into her houſe, were as creditable to her feelings, as it reflected diſgrace on thoſe who threw her into a ſituation to want that protection, expoſed as ſhe had been, by baſe artifices, to which the malice of her own ſex had attached guilt, exaggerating what candour ought to have extenuated."

In this predicament his mother had acted, as ſhe ever did, perfectly correct; he ſhould be always ready to defend her perſon and character from the calumny and inſults

of any man daring enough to attack either, (here he looked fiercely at Campley); for I cannot think, had the Lady in queſtion been the artful adventurer it appears the faſhion to ſuppoſe her, that ſhe would have refuſed the ſplendid offers of the Duke of Southernwood, the more honourable propoſals of Sir Harry Hurry, or rejected the independence generouſly offered by Sir James Lavington, as a compenſation for the unmerited ill treatment received from a part of his family, whoſe minds, I am informed, were poiſoned againſt her by an *inſidious enemy*, (here he glanced at Lady Fanny); ſhe would not have refuſed *all* thoſe advantages, preferring a ſtate of dependance, had ſhe been the depraved character your Ladyſhip repreſents, though it was with one of thoſe very *few* women who would never permit her to feel the weight of her obligations."

"Mighty heroic! all this, my Lord; I rejoice that the age of chivalry is not *paſſed*, or that you mean to bring it again into repute; but

but I grieve your Knightſhip has not choſen a more worthy object, in whoſe cauſe you might exert your valorous exploits."

"I perceive, with equal ſorrow, your Ladyſhip is determined to condemn this young woman, becauſe ſhe is found guilty of poſſeſſing youth, innocence, beauty, and merit, and mankind are reſolved to admire them; *envy* is ſurely a moſt criminal paſſion in Lady Fanny Oſwald, to whom Nature has been ſo liberal of charms; her boſom ſhould never harbour a gueſt that degrades and leſſens thoſe attractions which are acknowledged by all mankind."

While the former part of this ſpeech had ſtung her to the quick, the compliment, contained in the latter, called up the ſmiles and dimples that played round her really beautiful mouth; and when ſhe glanced her ſcrutinizing eyes over the figure of this young *Antinuous*, the idea ſtruck her, that he would be a conqueſt worthy her exertions; then to gain him from Ellinor, whom ſhe

now hated more than ever, for having eſcaped her perſecutions, who ſhe would not believe could behold ſuch a charming fellow with indifference; nor did ſhe ſuppoſe he would ſo ſtrenuouſly have taken her part, had his heart not been concerned in the buſineſs. Theſe having paſſed rapidly in her thoughts, ſhe inſtantly formed her reſolution, and began to play off all her attractions, and ſpread her lures to entrap her deſtined prey.

The Marquis, though many years younger than her artful Ladyſhip, was fully her equal in diſſimulation; he ſaw her intentions, and inwardly ſmiled at her artifices, determined to turn her own weapons againſt her, and to flirt with her *pour paſſer le temps*, ſhould his attempts fail on his lovely Ellinor, whom he could not bear to hear made the ſport of this malignant woman, and whoſe cauſe he determined, if poſſible, to revenge on her traducer, when occaſion ſerved.

Colonel

Colonel and Mrs. Campley had been ſilent during the diſcourſe that had paſſed between Lady Fanny and the Marquis; the former now turned the converſation on the topics of the day, when after ſitting a quarter of an hour, the Marquis roſe to take leave, and Lady Fanny ſaid, "Come, my Lord, though it is my fate to *quarrel* with all the men about this pert minx, who has moſt certainly thrown love-powder in their eyes, and blinded their judgment, I feel a ſtrong propenſity to be friends with *you*; and to prove it, though you accuſe me of *envy*, you will acquit me of malice, when I offer you the hand of reconciliation, after your taunting reproofs;—ſo, take it, lead me to my carriage, and now let all enmity ceaſe."

The Marquis bowing on it with much grace, led her down ſtairs, and when he put her into the chariot, he preſſed the fingers he ſtill held, which ſhe returned with equal fervour.

He had advanced further towards an intimacy in one ſhort hour, with this high-bred

woman of quality, than with Ellinor in all the weeks he had paſſed in her company. But thoſe plants, reared in the hot-beds of modern education, thrive luxuriantly; their paſſions are not to be reſtrained like thoſe of colder culture. Lady Fanny ordered her footman to give the Marquis a card, bidding him not forget that in *future* they were to be firm friends, and in conſequence of this peaceful negociation, ſhe ſhould expect an early viſit. He bowed, and promiſed obedience to her commands.

His *vanity* was flattered by her notice; ſhe was a fine woman, of high quality, and happened to be juſt then the *rage*. He clearly perceived Campley was a favoured admirer, and to rob that man of a miſtreſs, who had attempted to do as much by him, was "a conſummation devoutly to be wiſhed." For theſe weighty conſiderations, he pocketed her card, reſolving to profit by the invitation, on his return from Hampſhire, where he was now led both by duty and inclination.

CHAP. XIV.

THE Marquis ſet out the next morning for Hampſhire, fully determined to avail himſelf of Ellinor's evident partiality, to gain her on his own *terms*, and to truſt to his mother's affection to forgive ſo venial a fault, when it was irremediable.

As to marrying Ellinor, he was now more convinced of the impropriety of it than ever, ſince the malignant repreſentation by Lady Fanny Oſwald, of what the *world* would ſay of ſuch a proceeding. Theſe were the ſentiments and intentions with which the Marquis made his viſit to Bramble Hall, where it has been ſeen he managed to make himſelf a ſtill ſtronger intereſt in the heart of his

devoted victim; by infusing his *Platonic* lessons into her mind, he had lulled all caution asleep.

This was the state in which Ellinor and the Marquis were, — she all *confidence*, he all *hope*, when they returned to the metropolis, where he was her constant shadow, passing the greatest part of the day in Park-Street.

After some time was given to the decencies of mourning, the Dutchess was prevailed on by her son, and for the sake of giving pleasure to Ellinor, to appear in public. Her first night of returning to the world of fashion, after so long an interregnum, was decided to be at the opera. They did not go till late; the house was very full: as soon as they entered, every glass was pointed at their box; the laugh, the sneer, and audible whispers of the ladies, the confident bold stare of the men, spread rapidly round the circle. Ellinor's blushing face was the point to which

they were all concentrated; her eyes dropped abaſhed, under ſuch marked and public notice, though ſhe was not yet conſcious whether to place their particular regards to the account of inſult or admiration.

That was not fated to remain long doubtful; for when ſhe gained courage to look around, the firſt perſons that her eyes fixed on, were Lady Fanny Oſwald, Mrs. Oſwald and her daughters; from the latter of theſe ladies ſhe had received ſome civilities, and as they were looking full at her, ſhe thought it incumbent to make a courteſy. On this, Lady Fanny, after having reconnoitered her through the glaſs that hung from her neck, gave her a look of ineffable contempt, and whiſpered Mrs. Oſwald, who drew up into an attitude of moſt perpendicular ſtiffneſs, trying to throw into her unbending features what ſhe thought a commanding *hauteur*; the miſſes, her daughters, who under the tuition of their lady ſiſter, were making large

ſtrides to faſhionable impertinence, and had learned to give themſelves conſequential airs, firſt ſtared rudely in her face, then laughed aloud. As from this group ſhe turned ſhocked and mortified, her looks met thoſe of Lady Lavington and her daughter; here again ſhe thought it a debt of gratitude, however it might be received, to pay them her compliments; but they viewed her with the moſt frigid indifference, and turned away with apparent diſguſt, not noticing her ſalute.

It was now that our poor heroine felt the full completion of the malice of her foes, in the miſery of her ſituation. Her heart ſwelled almoſt to burſting; ſhe ſaw herſelf the mark for proud ſcorn to point her finger at; her calumniators had been but too ſucceſsful; that her character was ruined, and with it all hopes of future happineſs; for ſhould ſhe now be acknowledged by her parents, nothing leſs than a miracle could reſtore her to the good opinion of the world, who was impoſed upon

upon by the misrepresentation of her enemies, and the false medium through which all her actions had been shewn!

She felt conscious that appearances were against her; that her best friends exonerated her from blame, from a wish to believe her innocent, rather than from any proof that she was so; that by allowing the Dutchess to patronize her, she was injuring the character of that truly disinterested friend, who had a mind too liberal, a soul too exalted, to be swayed by popular opinion; who had never valued the world's censure, when her heart told her she was acting right towards an oppressed and insulted fellow-creature. But Ellinor felt that the more desirous the Dutchess was to brave all, and support her, she was the more powerfully called upon to prove herself worthy of such wondrous goodness, by not allowing her to make the sacrifice.

She

She therefore came to an inſtant determination, how to act in this critical ſituation, which, from being convinced it was right and proper, helped to ſtill her throbbing breaſt. Supported by a conſcience void of guile, her calm dignity returned; ſhe reſolved not to give her enemies a triumph by letting them witneſs her mortification; ſelf-aſſured, ſhe reſumed the chair ſhe had quitted for one at the back of the box, where ſhe had retired on receiving thoſe public inſults, being enabled by ten minutes reaſoning, and the reſolutions ſhe had made in conſequence, to return the contemptuous glances of her perſecutors with cool indifference.

The Dutcheſs, who had beheld this poor unfortunate with eyes that beamed effulgent pity, whoſe boſom heaved alternately with the ſoft ſighs of tender commiſeration, and throbbed with reſentment againſt the vile aſſaſſins of this perſecuted girl, while ſhe ſaw in ſilence the conflict that ſhook her fragile frame;

frame; and even the Marquis when he viewed this ſuffering beauty, it was nearly drawing vaulting Ambition from her ſeat, and placing gentle Love in its ſtead, in his breaſt. But *Pride* came to the help of the former, and whiſpered,—What marry a woman whom all the world condemns as unworthy that high honour? ah! no, that muſt *never be*.

The Dutcheſs gloried in her Ellinor, as ſhe ſaw her ſtruggles to recover equanimity; ſhe preſſed her hand to ſhow her approbation of a behaviour that met, and merited, her admiration.

Several men of faſhion, friends of the Marquis, and who were known to the Dutcheſs, now came into the box, to pay their compliments, and to get a nearer view of Ellinor, who was the novelty and wonder of the evening, from the ſtrange ſcenes in which ſhe had lately been an unwilling actreſs, that the malignant world had not failed to pourtray in the blackeſt colours of its creative fancy.

fancy. She felt herſelf an object of curioſity to thoſe gentlemen, and, when addreſſed by them, anſwered, with affected eaſe, and well-aſſumed cheerfulneſs; as ſhe ſaw that ſhe was watched by Lady Fanny and the Oſwald party, ſhe made great exertions not to let it appear that ſhe was depreſſed and vexed by their well-pointed inſults. She contrived ſo well to deceive them by an appearance of vivacity, that they experienced themſelves the mortification they meant to inflict.

Thus paſſed the time till the opera ended. The Dutcheſs and her party deſcended to the coffee-room, where they were joined by Sir Harry Hurry, and mingled in the well-dreſſed crowd, with a number of thoſe to whom Ellinor had been introduced when ſhe formed a part of Sir James Lavington's family.

The men ſtared impudently in her face, nodded with the careleſs eaſe and rude familiarity of the *preſent* day; and ſhe was addreſſed by ſeveral of them in the opera jargon,

jargon, "How d'ye do? a fine ſqueeze, curs'd hot! vaſtly pleaſant! I have run my foot through half a dozen muſlin trains already!" while the women with Lady Fanny Oſwald, and Lady Torpedo at their head, talked in audible whiſpers, and the name of Ellinor was heard buzzed from all parts of the room. To this was added the *quality ſtare*, ever adopted when they mean to annihilate, by a *look*, perſonages, who, like our heroine, have no claim but beauty and merit, to public admiration, and private ſuffrage.

The delicacy and ſuſceptibility of her heart could no longer ſupport her under the painful ſenſations ſhe felt at perceiving that ſhe was an object of ridicule to a *part* of the company, and of curioſity to *all*. She therefore intreated the Dutcheſs, in a whiſper, for permiſſion to retire; who, to cover the defeat of her friend, and to hinder the triumph of theſe determined women, who would glory in having carried their point, announced aloud, "I thank you, for your attention, my

my dear, I am really oppreſſed by the heat of the room, but much more annoyed by the votaries of ignorance and folly, with which it is filled; I will therefore thank you, Harry, to hand me to my carriage, while the Marquis takes care of Miſs Harcourt."

As they were retiring, they were met by the Duke of Southernwood, who, in deſpite of all the rebuffs he had experienced, buſtled up to pay his compliments to the Dutcheſs, and mumble out ſome hyperbolical ſpeeches to her fair companion. Thoſe were totally loſt upon Ellinor, who was too much abſorbed in diſagreeable cogitations on the occurrences of the evening to pay any attention to *him*. When the gentlemen had handed them to the carriage, they returned to the coffee-room.

As ſoon as the Dutcheſs and Ellinor arrived at home, the latter, with a flood of tears, related all ſhe had ſuffered from the cruel inſults to which ſhe had been that night expoſed;

expoſed; adding, that ſhe was perfectly convinced, there was but one part for her to act—to bury herſelf for ever in total ſecluſion, far removed from all thoſe with whom ſhe had hitherto reſided.—" Your Grace muſt ſee, that my own innocence, nor even your protecting friendſhip, can diſperſe thoſe clouds of prejudice by which I am environed; through the indefatigable endeavours of Lady Fanny Oſwald, aided by the Campley's, my reputation in the eyes of the world is gone. Nothing ſhort of the ſupernatural interpoſition of the Ruler of the Univerſe, who can bring light out of darkneſs, can reſtore me to its good opinion."

" Think not thus, my dear girl; truſt me, all will yet be well; let not your noble mind deſpond; give not your enemies ſo great a triumph; let them never boaſt that they have hunted you from ſociety; exert yourſelf *once* more; oppoſe the rectitude of your conduct to the falſehoods of their allegations; by perſeverance you will be enabled to conquer difficulties, at the magnitude of which

you

you are at preſent frightened. I know your mind capable of powerful exertions; you are at this moment called upon to rouſe them into action. I grant that your trials are great, but glorious will be your conqueſt, and I truſt your reward will yet be equal to your merit."

"How good, how kindly conſiderate, my dear Dutcheſs, to try by your friendly praiſes, to give me ſelf-confidence; I will act ſo as to deſerve them. Permit me once more to confeſs that weakneſs by which I have been actuated for ſome weeks paſt; it has occaſioned me to reſt ſupinely, lulled into a fancied ſecurity, by ſuppoſing that I was the conqueror of a paſſion to which I am ſtill a ſlave. I have expoſed the weakneſs of my heart, while I was complimenting the ſtrength of my underſtanding for enabling me to command its ſenſations, and permitting Reaſon to dictate its movements. This night has torn the veil from my eyes; I can no longer deceive myſelf; I ſee the total deſtruction of thoſe aſpiring hopes, that I had dared to admit into my breaſt.

"Can

"Can I expect the Marquis will raiſe me to the proud pre-eminence of being his wife, after the marked contempt and ignominy that I have this evening been treated with? No, I perceive the impoſſibility of his making me an honourable offer, or that your Grace ſhould accept me as a daughter; for could I be guilty of ſuch baſe ingratitude, in return for all the innumerable obligations I owe to your unexampled friendſhip, as to receive the Marquis, ſhould he be induced to ſeek ſo improper an alliance?

"I will never conſent to bring diſgrace, and conſequently regret, into your family; never will I permit you, whom I ſo truly love, to be marked out for calumny, by your predilection in favour of one who, by ſtrange incidents and falſe repreſentations, has been ſtigmatized by the world as practiſing on your credulity, impoſing herſelf on you as perſecuted and virtuous, while ſhe is *ſaid* to be the child of falſehood, the diſciple of deception, and the votary of vice. I now ſee clearly the total impoſſibility

lity of an union, that I never ought to have had the temerity to think of at all; but the preſumptuous idea has brought on me its deſerved puniſhment."

"Hurt, Ellinor, by the diſagreeable behaviour of a few malignant women of quality! you reaſon not with your uſual perſpicuity; *they* practiſe, under the ſanction of their nobility, the moſt vicious libertiniſm, while they pretend to ſhrink with horror at the *appearance* of an intrigue in you; but what outrages them, is not what they wiſh to be underſtood your ſuppoſed fall from virtue, but your beauty, merit, and talents, that attract the notice of mankind, and have already robbed them of many of their favourite admirers. To hinder you from ſhining in the ſame circle, is their end and aim; nor do I think they believe the ſcandalous ſtories they ſo induſtriouſly promulgate to your diſadvantage; but it is their intereſt to make them believed by others.

"I adviſe you boldly to meet your foes; be not diſcouraged at this firſt attack, ſhrink

no

not from inveſtigation, dare them to the combat; they will ſhun the encounter, and leave you in quiet poſſeſſion of the field. I love your ſpirit, and honour your ſentiments, but I muſt check your enthuſiaſm, or it will precipitate you into the gulph you wiſh to ſhun. Give not a viſionary conſequence to the world which it does not deſerve; for, from the retroſpective view I have taken of it, I will venture to announce, that its favours are fickle, its deciſions unjuſt, and its opinions, nine times out of ten, erroneous. All this, my young friend, you have experienced in the ſmall time you have been an inhabitant of it."

"Your Grace's arguments are right, your inferences juſt, your concluſions incontrovertible; but my ſingular ſituation precludes me from availing myſelf of them. A ſacrifice to the miſconceptions of individuals, and the prejudices of the world in general, at the preſent moment I cannot contend with any hopes of victory; there is only one path left for me to purſue, to retire into obſcurity

rity, till, by ſome unforſeen event, I am enabled to produce proofs of my innocence, and turn the tide of popular opinion in my favour. With how much pleaſure ſhall I *then* throw myſelf at your feet, and claim a renewal of your love, friendſhip, and protection, when I ſhall be found worthy of of thoſe bleſſings."

"I think you ſo at this moment, my dear Ellinor; but if you are determined to leave me, I know no arguments to add force to thoſe I have already uſed to detain you; for you have worked up a fervid imagination to a romantic *furor*, that ever ſets the cool dictates of ſober Reaſon at defiance. You are about to leave a friendly aſylum, and its comforts, to throw yourſelf into a ſtate of voluntary poverty, to depend on adventitious circumſtances for your exiſtence, to be expoſed to ſupport it under all thoſe inſulting degradations that "patient merit from the unworthy takes." Think once more before you determine upon ſuch a deſperate meaſure; depend on it, you have

embodied a ſhadow; you give a conſequence to the opinion of the world in the aggregate that it does not deſerve.

"I have ever lived for myſelf, deſpiſed its attacks, and laughed at its cenſures; conſcious within my own heart that I acted right, I treated, with cool contempt, the falſe light in which it took the trouble to place my actions. I early imbibed the idea, that freedom of will was the ſovereign good, and reſtraint the greateſt evil; that reaſon was given to enable us to judge for ourſelves, and conſcience placed as a monitor in our boſoms to deter us from error. I have tried to live up to its dictates, and feel a ſatisfaction that the world can neither *give* nor take *away*. I am convinced that in *your* ſituation, *you* cannot think and act for yourſelf as I have ever done; nor do I wiſh you to copy manners that are condemned by the majority of women, by whom I am pronounced to outrage the decencies of my ſex, becauſe I have preferred hunting down a fox to deſtroying a reputation, and a day's ſhooting to a

night ſpent at the hazard-table; founding my happineſs on pure ether, exerciſe, and freedom, which I enjoyed with great Nature's happy commoners, the beaſts of the field, and the birds of the air, in preference to breathing the congregated and ſuffocating air of a crowded rout, or a courtly ball room, where the perſon is ſpell-bound in the circle of faſhion, and the active principles of the ſoul are trammelled by vice, ſtifled by hypocriſy, and annihilated by indolence.

"I flew from this diſguſting ſcene, to paſs my time in health-giving recreations, and cheerful intercourſe with the choſen few who thought like myſelf; beſtowing a part of that fortune that with my preſent purſuits I could not ſpend, in aſſiſting the induſtrious, relieving the poor, and enabling the oppreſſed to obtain juſtice. By thus acting, I felt the reward of conſcious rectitude, was enabled to deſpiſe the misjudging world, and retort its ſarcaſms. No perſon has been more ſeverely attacked than myſelf; my beſt intentions were perverted, my moſt innocent

nocent actions misrepresented; but when they found I treated them with silent contempt, or hurled in return the shafts of irony at their most vulnerable follies, that I was fully competent to defend my actions and opinions—then they drew off their forces, leaving me to the quiet enjoyment of my eccentricities."

"Different, widely different, was your Grace situated in respect to the world and its anathemas to what I am; you had high rank, powerful friends, and a splendid fortune, to justify your actions, and to give consequence to your sentiments. I have none of these to support me; nothing but virtue and a few acquired talents to assist me in gaining a precarious subsistence: those, by the loss of reputation, will be rendered useless, at least under my present name and character. I must therefore assume another, to seek the means of existence in a sphere of life more appropriate to my humble fortune.

"Honoured by your patronage, flattered

by your kindneſs. I am now conſcious that I dared encourage fallacious hopes. I regarded the Marquis with a tender paſſion, whom I ſhould alone have thought of with grateful reſpect. The deluſive dream is *over*, and I awake to a proper ſenſe of what I owe to your Grace, to him, and to myſelf. Though deſerted by my relations, condemned by the world, oppreſſed by its inhabitants, I will yet make one effort to ſupport my independence. The ball has been ſo forcibly ſtruck by my opponents, that it has rouſed the energies of my mind from enervating liſtleſneſs and depreſſing deſpondence. My future happineſs or miſery muſt depend on my preſent determination: I feel that I have ſufficient command over my actions to be able to tear myſelf from all I love and revere; but even under the protection of your Grace, I dare not again face the world, depreſſed by calumny, cruſhed by its cenſures, till the appearances that now make againſt me are cleared away."

The

The Dutcheſs, now convinced that ſhe could not turn Ellinor from her purpoſe, requeſted ſhe would not think of leaving her, till ſhe had procured for her an aſylum; that as ſhe valued her friendſhip, ſhe muſt inſiſt on her accepting a ſum annually till ſhe was acknowledged by her parents—an event ſhe was convinced muſt ſoon happen; ſhe would then permit them to repay her, if ſhe was ſo faſtidiouſly delicate as to accept what ſhe deemed an obligation upon no other terms.

Ellinor's heart, divided by contending paſſions, each ſtriving for dominion, felt gratitude for the perſevering kindneſs of the Dutcheſs, the moſt predominant paſſion by which it was actuated. It precluded utterance, but ſpoke volumes in her expreſſive countenance and in the faſt falling tears that ſhe ſhed on the boſom of her friend, as ſhe embraced and wiſhed her ſweet repoſe.

CHAP. XV

WHEN Ellinor retired to her room, ſhe was informed there had been a letter left for her in the early part of the evening by a man who ſaid it was of the utmoſt conſequence, and required an immediate anſwer. She took it from the ſimpering Bloſſom, enquiring why it was not given her directly on her return.

"*Becaſe*," anſwered this pert Abigail, I thought it might be from ſome of you *loveyers*, and belike a ſecret to her *Greece*; here be two more—Mr. John ſays they be *howlandiſh* ones."

Ellinor

Ellinor ſnatched the letters with more anger than ſhe uſed to permit herſelf to feel for ſo ignorant an object as Bloſſom, bidding her leave the room, and not again take the liberty to form conjectures about any thing that concerned her.

"Well, Miſs, I *ham* going, I don't want for to ſtay, for I be quite aſleep" Out ſhe flounced, muttering, as ſhe banged the door after her, "What mighty *hairs* ſome folks gives themſelves to thoſe they think their *hinferiours*, but there mayn't be *hallways* ſuch *hodds* 'tween us.

Little troubling herſelf with the impertinence of this laſt ſpeech, or ſeeking to inveſtigate the cauſe of Bloſſom's change of behaviour, who, from fawning ſervility, had aſſumed an air of inſolent rudeneſs and diſguſting familiarity for ſome weeks paſt; although this alteration had not eſcaped the notice of Ellinor, ſhe had been above complaining to the Dutcheſs, ſuppoſing

it proceeded more from the weakneſs of her head, than the badneſs of her heart.

Once more alone, ſhe tore open the little note that was ſaid to be of ſo much conſequence; it contained, in almoſt illegible characters, only theſe words, "If you wiſh to know who are the authors of your exiſtence, come with the bearer to a dying ſinner, who fears ſhe ſhall not be ſpared long enough from a dreadful eternity to do you juſtice."

What were the feelings of our heroine, when, to this ſcrawl, ſhe perceived no date, name, or direction where ſhe was to go, or for whom to enquire! Perhaps this very moment was the criſis of her fate! The writer might, ere this, have breathed her laſt; the ſecret of her birth might then die with her, and her preſent perplexity would never know a termination. It was agony in the extreme to be ſo near the knowledge ſhe had ſo *long* ſought, ſo ardently deſired; to be

ſated ſtill to live in hope and doubt, was the moſt poignant miſery.

She exclaimed, "Oh! that deteſted opera! what ſorrow and diſappointment has it not occaſioned me! had I not gone to it, I might, perhaps, inſtead of being a deſerted and miſerable outcaſt, an alien, the ſport of fortune, had I been at home when the meſſenger came, I might now—Oh! ecſtatic thought! I might at this inſtant have been ſtrained to the throbbing boſom of a tender mother; bleſſed, acknowledged, and protected by a rejoicing father."

Thus, with the fervid enthuſiaſm of a youthful imagination, did ſhe encourage thoſe ſanguine hopes, that the nameleſs note had rouſed in her fancy.

She thought of making inquiries of the ſervants about the meſſenger, if he had left a verbal direction where ſhe was to come; but looking at her watch, ſhe found it was paſt three o'clock; ſhe would not take the

liberty to alarm the family at ſo improper an hour, or if ſhe did gain any information, could ſhe go to the writer till the next day; therefore ſhe muſt curb her impatience till the domeſtics ſhould ariſe.

The other letters now met her eyes; one was from Howard, which breathed the ſoft ſentiments of love, friendſhip, and eſteem, evidently tinctured with deep regret at his not being able to induce her to ſhare with him the ſplendid fortune that would now ſoon be his own; but which could not contribute to his happineſs, unleſs his beloved Ellinor participated it with him. He ſaid, that his uncle was ſtill alive, though he hourly expected his demiſe; and whenever that event took place, he ſhould haſten to England, to plead at the feet of his fair arbitreſs, for a mitigation of her ſentence.

He congratulated her upon being ſo happily ſituated with the Dutcheſs of Dreadnought; hoped ſhe would guard her heart againſt the dangerous allurements of her ſon,

who, it was ſaid on the continent, like another Cæſar, had made conqueſts wherever he appeared, and, like that Roman, had graced his triumphs by carrying away in chains the hearts of all the beautiful *Signoras* of every city where he had reſided in the courſe of his travels. When he was haſtily recalled to England, it was whiſpered, they breathed ſighs enough to fill the ſails that were to waft him to Britain's ſea-girt iſle.

Howard added, "Think not, charming Ellinor, this ariſes from the miſrepreſentations of a jealous rival, but from cautious friendſhip, to warn you, that this all-conquering Marquis is ſaid to be as fickle in his diſpoſition, as his perſon is prepoſſeſſing; that he has not acted the moſt honourable part by the ſuſceptible females of this luxurious country is certain. —But more of this when we meet, though I ought to beg a thouſand pardons for mentioning it at all, as it appears to imply a doubt of thoſe diſcriminating powers of mind which have ſo often moved my admiration in my amiable friend, that I am con-

vinced would never allow her heart to be charmed by merely 'a ſet of features and complexion, or to admire the tincture of a ſkin.' High-ſouled herſelf, ſhe could not feel a predilection for an object that ever deſcended to the meanneſs of falſehood, to deſtroy that ſex he was born to protect."

As Ellinor peruſed this letter, ſhe was convinced Howard would not thus have written of the Marquis but from good authority, and to ſave her from his wiles. She could now no longer hug the dear deceit to her boſom; ſhe perceived in his whole behaviour that he was artfully trying to make an intereſt in her heart, that he might, with impunity, inſult her by degrading offers. To marry her ſhe ſaw clearly had never been his intention; for independent as he was of his father, certain as he muſt be from her behaviour of the conſent of the Dutcheſs, there was nothing to hinder him from honourably avowing himſelf, had he entertained ſuch an idea. She bluſhed when ſhe thought how undeſerving ſhe was of Howard's

Howard's good opinion; mortified at the retroſpect of her late weakneſs, ſhe thus apoſtrophrized, "why cannot I command this rebellious heart to beat for the long-tried and worthy Howard, as it does for this too agreeable Marquis? Why am I not able to add *love* to that friendſhip and eſteem his merit compels me to feel for him. I am determined to conquer this unfortunate ill-placed paſſion."

This wiſe reſolution helped to recover her ſpirits.

She now read the other epiſtle; it was from the friend of her youth, Miſs O'Neil, with whom ſhe had kept up an uninterrupted correſpondence ever ſince ſhe left the convent; but hitherto, it being of no conſequence to this hiſtory, we have not noticed it.

Clara acquainted her, that her mother, who was ſuppoſed to be in a decline, had been ordered to Briſtol, where ſhe ſhould accompany

accompany her, and moſt ardently hoped to be able to embrace Ellinor, before ſhe reviſited Ireland; for if Lady O'Neil did not experience benefit from drinking the waters, and the fine air of Clifton, they were to proceed to London for the advice of the beſt phyſicians in that metropolis; for Sir Dennis wiſhed to try every means to preſerve a life ſo precious to her family as Lady O'Neil's, who was the beſt of wives and mothers, and the tendereſt and ſincereſt of friends.

Ellinor grieved for the ſorrows of the daughter of ſuch a parent, whoſe merit was ſo emphatically deſcribed; for ſhe had been taught to believe, that conſumptive patients ordered to Briſtol, were literally ſent upon a forlorn hope.

Her fire was now near expiring, and the watchman calling paſt five o'clock, arouſed her from theſe meditations; it was yet ſome hours before ſhe could ſatisfy her impatient curioſity, by inquiries after the meſſenger who had brought the note. She now for the firſt time recollected, that ſhe was ſitting in all

all the *paraphernalia* of opera ſplendour, which having thrown off, ſhe retired to bed, but not to ſleep; buſy fancy precluded that comfort to the wretched, by recalling to her memory the occurrences of the laſt twelve hours, which ſhe pondered over till the clock ſtruck ſeven, when ſhe aroſe, dreſſed herſelf, and deſcended to the parlour, to ſeek information from the ſervants; but all the intelligence ſhe could gain, was that the note had been brought by a man, who ſaid, it was of much conſequence the lady ſhould come to the perſon who wrote it as ſoon as ſhe returned home.

Ellinor was diſtracted to know how ſhe was to act to diſcover the writer, who it was plain the bearer thought had incloſed a proper direction. She was found by the Dutcheſs drowned in tears of vexation; who being made acquainted with the cauſe, tried to comfort her with hopes, that ſhe would again be ſent for in the courſe of the morning, when ſhe did not arrive in conſequence of the meſſage received.

" I ſee

"I ſee but little chance of that, for the ſummons was evidently written by a dying perſon, who might naturally ſuppoſe that the place of their reſidence had not been omitted. Perhaps at this moment the hand that wrote, and the heart that dictated it, ſleep in death, and with them all my flattering hopes of *ever* being acknowledged by my parents."

"Shake off this enervating deſpondence, my dear girl; exert yourſelf; write advertiſements to be inſerted in all the newſpapers, that if the man who left a note laſt night at the Dutcheſs of Dreadnought's, will return, and ſay from whom he brought it, he ſhall receive five guineas for his trouble."

Ellinor having thanked her Grace for this idea, put it in immediate execution; when ſhe was juſt going to ſend them, it occurred to her recollection, that they could not appear till the next day.

The Dutcheſs now ſeeing no remedy but patience, recommended that ſovereign balm

to

to her young friend, and mounted her horſe to take her accuſtomed ride.

Ellinor, mortified at the delay, ſet down to the breakfaſt table, where ſhe had juſt ſwallowed a cup of tea, when the Marquis was announced; who entered in apparent high ſpirits, ſaying, he was come to partake of her *dejeuné*. When ſhe lifted her languid and ſwollen eyes to his face, and ſaw him gazing at her with ardent curioſity, the lily of her cheek became the colour of the damaſk roſe, and through the ſilken laſhes that fringed her eye-lids, dropped the tear of ſuffering ſenſibility on her lovely boſom, which heaved with diſtracting emotions.

The Marquis, in whoſe idea ſhe never looked ſo truly lovely, ſo intereſtingly faſcinating, at once creating love and pity, was by the impulſe of the moment, thrown off his wonted guard of prudent and cautious reſerve. Snatching her hand, he ſaid, "Deareſt Ellinor, allow me to kiſs off theſe precious drops that

that fall from thoſe brilliant orbs where love and pleaſure alone ſhould revel; they ought only to overflow with delight. That face, moulded by the Graces, to raiſe ecſtatic joy in the boſom of every beholder, ſhould never be clouded with the hue of ſorrow. To me be it given, to drive for ever from your boſom carking care." He now threw himſelf at her feet, and ſeizing both her hands, covered them with ardent kiſſes—" Permit the man that adores you, to raiſe you from dependance, inſolence, and misfortune; ſay you will be mine, and the ſun ſhall only riſe to witneſs our joys, and ſet envious of our happineſs."

Thus far he had proceeded without any interruption from Ellinor; the ſudden and unexpected avowal of his paſſion, the vivacity of his ideas, the vehemence of his language, weak and depreſſed as her mind was, appeared to carry her imagination along with them like a whirlwind. She tried to rouſe herſelf to thoſe exertions her preſent ſituation required, convinced this was the moment to

ſhow

ſhow her capability of putting all her reſolves into execution, and by refuſing the ſon's hand, prove herſelf worthy the friendſhip of his mother. She therefore requeſted the Marquis to be ſeated, and hear her; but he was too great an adept in the ſcience of love to comply with this requeſt. He had long perceived that he was in full poſſeſſion of her heart; he had taken her by ſurpriſe, and declared his paſſion at the moment *that heart* was ſoftened by a recent ſorrow; he well knew the advantage an artful lover might gain by compaſſionate ſympathy and tender condolence, when the oppreſſed and enervated mind, ſoothed by the ſoft blandiſhments of pity, falls an eaſy victim to gratitude for the commiſeration women are taught to believe their misfortunes have excited. He therefore vowed nothing but her conſenting to be his ſhould induce him to quit her feet, where he would await the ſentence that was to raiſe him to everlaſting joys, or doom him to the extreme

of

of miſery. Finding he was reſolute, ſhe thus addreſſed him:

"I have nothing, Sir, to repay you for the diſintereſted love you offer, or the ſplendour you ſay courts my acceptance, but ſincere and grateful friendſhip. I believe, Marquis, that you are fully acquainted with my unfortunate ſtory; as much at leaſt as I know of it myſelf. Can you then think, that I would meanly take advantage of a paſſion that at preſent abſorbs your reaſon, and blinds your judgment, and allow you to debaſe yourſelf, the laſt of an illuſtrious line, by marrying the indigent Ellinor? deſerted by her natural protectors, ſnatched from inevitable ruin by the commiſerating kindneſs of your angel mother, ſupported by her bounty, even after, by a ſtrange concatenation of circumſtances, the world has united to condemn her guilty! Can I, ſo ſituated, permit you, my Lord, to make me your wife? or in return for all her numerous favours, conſent you ſhould give the

the Dutcheſs of Dreadnought a daughter that muſt ſully your fame, and preclude all hopes of thoſe ſplendid connexions that were recommended to you by your late uncle, in forming your matrimonial eſtabliſhment? For theſe incontrovertible reaſons, it is incumbent on me to refuſe the honour of your hand. Had I been born your equal in rank and fortune, or even the acknowledged child of reſpectable parents, had my character been as free from the world's cenſure, as in reality it deſerves to be, then perhaps I might have accepted the offer it is now my duty to refuſe."

The rectitude of her heart, and the propriety of ſentiment it dictated, had now reſtored ſome of her wonted firmneſs. As ſhe finiſhed the laſt ſentence, ſhe aroſe to leave the room, but the Marquis ſtill forcibly detained her; it was *his turn* now to feel depreſſed:—it was evident from the anſwer ſhe had given to his profeſſions of love, ſhe ſuppoſed an honourable motive that he neither intended

nor

nor *wiſhed* to be underſtood. It was true that ſhe had refuſed him—even on that idea *refuſed* to be the wife of Marquis Fearleſs; he was mortified at her rejection, while he ſmiled at her temerity; for though he could not withhold his admiration of ſentiments ſo noble, independent, generous, and honourable, that could enable this fair plebeian thus heroically to reject the man for whom her heart in ſecret ſighed, to whom in happier circumſtances ſhe would in rapture have given her hand, he could not prevail on himſelf to make her an offer of marriage.

He therefore ſaw the neceſſity of explaining his views, and that *directly*. He could not permit her to leave him with the idea, that he had condeſcended to think of making her a Marchioneſs, and that ſhe had the proud triumph of refuſing this high honour; therefore, calling up all his blandiſhments, his languiſhing glances, his dimpled ſmiles, to aid his cauſe, while he ſtill held her hands, which, in ſpite of oppoſition, he alternately preſſed

preſſed to his lips, he ſaid, "My adorable girl, in what manner ſhall I expreſs how much your delicate ſentiments and diſintereſted principles in reſpect to me claim and have my admiration. The ſituation that I am doomed to fill; that poſt in ſociety handed down to me by my anceſtors, that I muſt not forſake, that I cannot degrade, is properly ſeen by you and underſtood. But with a heart liberal as your's, a mind above being ſwayed by the vulgar prejudices of the world, what is there to preclude my lovely Ellinor from *giving* and *receiving* mutual happineſs? What but to deſpiſe the ſhackles impoſed by prieſtcraft, that alone are calculated to unite eſtates? Hearts can only be cemented when

——— "Souls each other draw,
"When Love is Liberty, and Nature Law.

"You have no relations who have any claims upon your conduct, none to reſtrain you from making an offering of free-will, or chain you down to enſlave the native free-

dom

dom of your mind, to compel you to keep up the conſequence of your progenitors, by obliging you to ally yourſelf to age and ugline ſs. No, deareſt Ellinor, you are happily free from thoſe family reſtrictions by which your devoted adorer is trammelled; that alone precludes him from offering to link himſelf to you in matrimonial chains; but be aſſured you ſhall *ever* bind him in the roſy fetters of love and pleaſure. I offer you *Carte Blanche* in reſpect to ſettlements; your eſtabliſhment ſhall be the envy of the moſt faſtidious women of faſhion. Earth, ſea, and air ſhall all be ranſacked to contribute to your gratification. You ſhall be a Marchioneſs in every thing but the title, and the loweſt of your ſlaves ſhall be your adoring lover, your grateful Fearleſs; whoſe whole attention and fortune ſhall be dedicated to anticipate the wiſhes of his charming *miſtreſs*."

Ellinor had heard, with pangs unutterable, a declaration ſo wounding to her pride, ſo inſulting

inſulting to that high-wrought, honourable, diſintereſted paſſion, that ſhe felt conſcious beat within her boſom. Her glowing cheeks drank the tears of indignation, as unconſciouſly they poured down in torrents. Shocked and mortified as ſhe was, by propoſals ſo degrading from the only man for whom her heart had ever owned a preference; to hear him avow an illicit paſſion, and offer her terms to become the wanton of his idle hours; there was madneſs in the thought! What an opinion muſt he have formed of her principles, before he dared make propoſals that outraged decency, and inſulted his mother in the perſon of her friend! Theſe ideas flaſhed rapidly through her burning brain; ſhe burſt from his arms, which he had folded round her waiſt; and looking on him with eyes that ſhot glances of mingled contempt and dignified pride, ſhe thus addreſſed him:

"Marquis, I ſhall not condeſcend to an-

ſwer a converſation I ought never to have *heard*, and that you would not have dared to ſhock my ears with, but on the ſuppoſition that I felt a weak partiality for your perſon that would blind my judgment to the depravity of your principles. Learn your error, and know that the poor, deſerted, and inſulted Ellinor deſpiſes the *one*, and ſpurns the *other*. Allured by the ſpecious veil of honourable affection, by which you covered the inſidious views of your bad heart, ſhe gave you her friendſhip and eſteem. The maſk withdrawn; you appear in your native deformity; ſhe will henceforth avoid the contamination of your ſociety: you now ſee her for the *laſt* time. But as you are the ſon of my much-loved, highly-valued protectreſs, I will rather ſubmit to the appearance of ingratitude to the Dutcheſs, than agonize her maternal boſom with the pangs I know it would feel, were ſhe acquainted with your diſhonourable treatment of the woman ſhe has dignified with the name of friend. Were I to explain your

your conduct to her, as the motive of my future actions, you would loſe the affection of that beſt of mothers; the rectitude, by which her ſentiments are governed, would ſpurn from her preſence for ever the artful ſeducer of unprotected innocence. Much as you would have injured, ill as you have deſerved ſuch lenity from me, I feel at this trying moment the want of a tender parent *too* keenly to deprive *you* of that ineſtimable bleſſing."

At the concluſion of this ſpeech Ellinor retired, leaving the creſt-fallen and aſtoniſhed Marquis transfixed to his ſeat. On entering her dreſſing-room ſhe flung herſelf into a chair, where her boſom was convulſed by all thoſe contending paſſions that ſtruggle for pre-eminence over frail humanity, and ſhake the faculties of reaſon. The lacerated heart of this devoted victim to the crimes and vices of others palpitated even to burſting; ſhe preſſed her burning hands againſt her throbbing temples, to quiet the maddening ſenſations that paſſed rapidly through her

brain, as ſhe revolved the various ſufferings ſhe had ſuſtained ſince the preceding evening, that had been one ſcene of complicated miſery. But this *laſt* wound to her ſenſibility appeared the *acme* of mental torment.

From the conflict her mind had ſuſtained, and want of reſt, ſhe felt extremely ill, alternately ſhaking with cold, and burning with heat. At this inſtant Bloſſom acquainted her, that the man who had left the note laſt night, was below. In Ellinor's eagerneſs to ſee him, ſhe forgot both mental and bodily pain, and ruſhing by her, ſhe was in the hall in a moment, and eagerly demanded her letter. The man ſaid he had none; but if ſhe pleaſed, ſhe muſt go with him directly, or the lady would be dead before ſhe arrived. Ellinor made no further enquiries, but ordered him to call a coach: ſhe returned to her room, tied on her bonnet and cloak, when, not knowing what occaſion ſhe might have for it, put what money ſhe was poſſeſſed of into her purſe, wrote a few lines to the Dutcheſs

as

as ſhe ſtood impatiently waiting the return of the meſſenger, mentioning the emergency of the ſummons ſhe had received; locked her writing-box, and deſcended to the breakfaſt-room, where, half an hour before, ſhe had left the Marquis, who was propelled to admire the conduct, and reſpect the ſentiments that raiſed the character of Ellinor, while his was humiliated even in his own partial eyes. Fearing to meet the ſcrutinizing looks of his mother, he had departed, truſting to Ellinor's aſſertion, that ſhe would not inform her of his behaviour that morning; ſtill flattering his vanity, ſhe might yet be prevailed on, by the love ſhe had almoſt acknowledged ſhe felt, to accept him on his own terms.

Ellinor, proudly conſcious of the dignity of virtue, honour, and integrity ſhe knew ſhe poſſeſſed, felt her preference for the Marquis changed to ſomething very like hatred, as he would have "baſely robbed her of theſe her only riches, and made her poor indeed."

CHAP. XVI.

THE man now returned with a hackney coach, in which Ellinor being ſeated, her attendant ſaid, he had given orders where to drive, and got up behind it. She fell into a train of reflection on the viciſſitudes of her paſt life, the misfortunes of which had ariſen from her unprotected ſtate, on the ſuppoſition that ſhe belonged to nobody. The idea that ſhe had no father or brother to reſent the inſults offered her, had expoſed her to receive them; ſhe fondly flattered herſelf ſhe was now going to be acknowledged by ſome dear relations, who would in future ſuſtain and ſhield her from the miſeries a young woman in a ſtate of dependance is ever doomed to experience, either from the

the premeditated malice, or ignorant miſconſtructions of the world.

She was rouſed from her reverie by the ſtopping of the coach at a grocer's ſhop; on looking up, ſhe found ſhe was in Oxford-Street. On the man's knocking at a private door, it was opened by a pretty genteel looking young woman, who civilly aſſiſted Ellinor to alight.

Having diſcharged her vehicle, ſhe followed her conductreſs into a neat parlour behind the ſhop, when deſiring her to be ſeated, ſhe ſaid, "I am quite ſorry, Miſs, to ſee you look ſo ill; pray let me give you ſome drops before you go up ſtairs, for it is a terrible ſight you have to encounter. Death is always ſhocking when dying perſons are reſigned to their fate, and have ſettled all their affairs; that is not the caſe with poor Mrs. M'Cormick, who has been ſo agitated ever ſince ſhe loſt her ſpeech, and throws herſelf into ſuch dreadful agonies, becauſe ſhe

cannot make us comprehend what ſhe wants, that nothing but humanity for a fellow-creature could prevail on me to go into her room. I am afraid ſhe has committed ſome very great offence againſt God, that makes her ſo unwilling to die. I am ſure I pity ſuch a charming young lady as you appear to be, coming only to witneſs her diſſolution; you no doubt are related to her, by the great deſire ſhe has to ſee you."

"Speechleſs, did you ſay? ſo very near her end! dear Madam, do not detain me; my every hope in this world depends on her being enabled to know and ſpeak to me."

Ellinor now flew up ſtairs, followed by the young woman, who ſaid, "If it is of ſuch material conſequence, I am truly ſorry you could not be found laſt night, as ſhe then had an interval of reaſon, and in ſome degree recovered her voice; but her impatient anger at your not coming has occaſioned a relapſe, and the doctor, who is juſt gone, ſays ſhe cannot laſt many hours."

This

This converſation brought them to a chamber on the ſecond floor, which, on Ellinor's entering, ſhe found in the bed, ſupported with pillows, in the perſon of the dying Mrs. M'Cormick, the unfeeling guardian of her infancy. Had not the rigidity of her features been too ſtrongly impreſſed on her memory for any change or ſituation to obliterate it, ſhe could not now have recogniſed the miſerable object before her. The ſallow ſkin hung looſely over her fleſhleſs countenance; her eyes glared ghaſtly in their hollow ſockets—ſhe rolled them around as if in expectation of ſome coming object; her mouth was drawn on one ſide by a paralytic ſtroke, which had thus reduced her, taken away the uſe of her right ſide, and robbed her of ſpeech; ſhe had the convulſive rattles in her throat, the *laſt* ſad ſignal that proclaims the diſunion of *ſoul* and *body*.

While Ellinor, with folded arms, and trembling knees, viewed, for the firſt time in her life, in this diſguſting object before

her, the approach of the grim tyrant, who here aſſumed his moſt terrific ſhape, armed with all his horrors, ſhe ſhrunk appalled from the contemplation. The eyes of the dying Mrs. M'Cormick now fixed upon her with a wild ſtare, as if ſhe appeared to recollect her; ſhe made an attempt to ſpeak, but not a word could be underſtood. She made an exertion, as a laſt effort, to raiſe herſelf in bed, and ſhewed ſigns of impatience for writing materials to be brought to her.

This was directly complied with, but her right hand was already dead; a pen was placed in her left, while Ellinor ſupported her, offering up the moſt ardent ſupplications to Heaven that ſhe might be enabled to uſe it. Nothing could be done; ſhe was too far gone. Ellinor was diſtracted by conflicting paſſions; ſhe ſaw her guardian dying, and with her the ſecret of her birth; ſhe requeſted the young woman who ſtood by her, and appeared to feel commiſeration for her evident diſtreſs, to ſend for the doctor,

tor, that he might try if it was not poſſible to give Mrs. M'Cormick a cordial to renovate her faculties, if but for a few minutes. The requeſt was immediately complied with.

When this illegitimate ſon of Eſculapius made his appearance, he marched up in a quick ſtep to the bed of the dying Mrs. M'Cormick, whom having glanced his eye over, with the moſt unfeeling indifference he addreſſed himſelf to the young woman, "Mrs. Foſter, I am ſurpriſed you ſhould ſend for me again, after I had told you this morning your lodger muſt die. She has not taken any of my *medecines* theſe two days; do you ſuppoſe a man of my conſequence is to dance attendance for nothing; or that Luther Vanaſs, whoſe profeſſional ſkill is ſo *notorious*, who is the wonder, the ſurpriſe, and envy of the phyſical world, has nothing to do but to cloſe the eyes of old women?"

"Sir," replied Ellinor, "it is not expected of you to waſte that time, which *you* value ſo

highly, in a gratuitous viſit; I will undertake to ſee you paid for your attendance."

"Right, Ma'am, you ſpeak very much to the *purpoſe*; I will ſee what is to be done, though I was rather angry with my neighbour, Mrs. Foſter, as ſhe and all the world muſt know (who read the newſpapers, which every body does, ſince the laſt new *tax* upon them) that between the hours of one and four, I ſee my patients at home;—they are innumerable;—no man ſo hurried;—they always bring me heavy guineas;—I never take light ones;—I anſwer caſes in letters, if they contain the *ſolid*;—can't do without the needful;—how is my carriage to roll?—*horſes* can't live upon phyſic;—my coachman won't *take* any thing that belongs to medicine, but his *maſter*.—I muſt be well paid; then I promiſe to *cure* all the *incurable* diſeaſes of this great metropolis, paſt, preſent, and to come.—*Great* undertaking, Ma'am!"

"Great, indeed, Sir, but this is not to the purpoſe. I wiſh you to exert your wonderful

derful talents to renovate, if poſſible, the poor object before you."

"All in good time, Ma'am, think of her preſently; I am quite immerſed in the multiplicity of my concerns, for beſides all I have told you, I am very buſy making alterations, additions, emendations, and corrections for the nineteenth edition of my book.—Muſt have heard of my book, Ma'am—the firſt work that has appeared in the medical world, ſince Boeerhave, worth reading;—calculated to immortalize its author."

"Bleſs me!" cried Mrs. Foſter, "nineteen editions! why, Mr. Folio told my huſband it was never enquired for; that he was *aſhamed* to ſell it, and his cuſtomers to *purchaſe* it."

"Oh! yes, I know that; a combination of the *regular* dunces,—a Warwick-Lane junto, to prevent my ſtudies, and ſcientific knowledge being properly appreciated;—but it's no matter; *worth* will make its way, and find its own *place*, if I can but keep *moving*.—It muſt eternize the name of Vanaſs, as a friend

to

to ſucceeding ages; it will be tranſlated into all languages, read by all nations, and handed down to all poſterity;—don't you think ſo, Ma'am?

"If the riches of the ſtate, as we are taught to believe, conſiſt in the plenitude of its ſubjects, then muſt my merit be rewarded with high honours by the gratitude of my moſt gracious Sovereign; for my literary labours are ſolely directed to that great end, perfectly calculated to aid and aſſiſt in bringing to perfection the riſing generation. The miniſter may carry on the war as long as he pleaſes, the country will never miſs the tens of thouſands that "*are killed off*," if the liege ſubjects of this realm will but employ Luther Vanaſs, buy his book, follow his advice, and take his preſcriptions; the King, God bleſs him! ſhall never want men to figh this battles; by my *ſyſtem* there will be ſoon more mouths than meat.

"Pray, Mrs. Foſter, did you ever read my *aſtoniſhing* pamphlet?"

"Not I, indeed."

"Make

"Make your huſband ſtudy it; you will ſoon have a patriarchal family."

"No need of that, Sir; we have more already than, in theſe hard times, we can properly provide for.—My patience is quite exhauſted; for God's ſake, let us talk of ſomething elſe than your *filthy* book, Mr. Vanaſs; you was not ſent for to puff yourſelf, but to ſee if it was poſſible to give any medicine to reſtore Mrs. M'Cormick, that ſhe might be enabled to ſpeak, if it was only a few words; for her doing ſo is of the utmoſt conſequence to this young lady."

Here Vanaſs, ſtaring impudently at Ellinor, anſwered, grinning at the ſame time to ſhew his teeth, "Firſt time in all my diffuſive practice I was ever deſired to reſtore a woman's tongue; but as I know nothing is impoſſible to my *univerſal panacea*, I will ſee what I can do to oblige you, Ma'am.' Then ordering the nurſe to call up his chariot, he marched off with the ſame bold effrontery with which he had entered.

Ellinor

Ellinor had thrown herſelf into a chair by the bed-ſide, while Mr. Vanaſs had been boaſting of his ſuperlative ſcience; and as ſhe viewed the convulſive ſtruggles of expiring nature in the poor object before her, pity for thoſe evident ſufferings forbad the idea of prolonging them for any intereſted motives to herſelf. Was it even in the power of this *charlatan* Vanaſs to lengthen her pangs for ten minutes, ſhe felt that ſhe ought not to permit it to be done. While theſe thoughts, ſo worthy the tenderneſs of her heart, were paſſing in her mind, ſhe ſat with her eyes fixed on the face of Mrs. M'Cormick, who ſuddenly became more tranquil: the working of the muſcles ceaſed, and Ellinor thought that *all* was over; but the nurſe ſaid, that ſhe only dozed; it was a *lightening* before death, and perhaps ſhe might awake ſenſible, for it was what ſhe had ſeen frequently happen.

Ellinor offered up a moſt fervent prayer that ſhe might prognoſticate right; and

having expreſſed her determination to await the event, the young woman, who had hitherto ſhewn her ſo much attention, and appeared to be the miſtreſs of the houſe, ſolicited her to quit ſo ſhocking a ſight, and to retire with her to the next room, till ſome change took place, of which the nurſe would give her the earlieſt information.

Ellinor, who found herſelf very *ill* and *faint*, followed her to a ſmall and neat apartment on the ſame floor, where her kind hoſteſs, who was ſhocked at her evident diſtreſs, ſolicited her to take ſome refreſhment. She declined any thing but a glaſs of hartſhorn and water, which after having drank, her companion apologized for being obliged to leave her, to attend to the family concerns, but deſired ſhe would ring for any thing ſhe wanted.

Once more left alone, her thoughts reverted to her recent ſorrows. The diſhonourable offers made her by the Marquis, his taking the

the advantage of her partiality for him, to inſult her, had given a mortal ſtab to her pride and affection, and determined her, if poſſible, to find an *antidote* in his behaviour to the *poiſon* of love, if even in the attempt to draw forth the barbed arrow from her heart, the warm current of life ſhould guſh through the wound. She felt ſo ill, low, and depreſſed, as ſhe leant her head on the table, that ſhe thought the death ſhe courted was now at hand. She had been alone about an hour, when Mrs. Foſter returned with a baſon of ſoup, which ſhe entreated her to try to ſwallow, obſerving, if ſhe did not make an effort to ſupport herſelf, ſhe would never have ſtrength to go through the dreadful ſcene that awaited her in the death of her relation; for ſuch Mrs. Foſter ſuppoſed Mrs. M'Cormick to be.

Ellinor, full of gratitude for theſe kind attentions, took what ſhe had brought her, and feeling a little renovated, enquired of Mrs. Foſter

Mrs. Foſter how long her dying lodger had been with her.

"Poor woman! ſhe has reſided with us only ſix weeks; what I know of her ſtory is truly pitiable, but I ſuppoſe you are already acquainted with it."

"Indeed I am not, and ſhall be much obliged for your information, for I have never ſeen or heard any thing of her for theſe twelve months, till laſt night I received a note."

"I will cheerfully make you acquainted with all that is come to my knowledge about her late misfortunes, which I believe will cauſe her ſpeedy diſſolution.

"Mrs. M'Cormick was a maiden lady of good fortune; at Bath ſhe met with a gentleman from Ireland who called himſelf M'Cormick, though it is ſuppoſed that is not his real name. He paſſed himſelf on her, as having an eſtate of fifteen hundred pounds a year, and a houſe in a park in his own country. He pretended to be violently

in

in love, and perſuaded her to marry him in a great hurry, becauſe he ſaid he wanted to take her with him to Ireland; his mother being dying, he wiſhed to be in time to receive her *bleſſing* and her *jointure*, that he might give the *one* to his dear wife, and take the *other* himſelf.

"The old lady allowed herſelf to be induced to go one morning to the Abbey Church, and to give him a legal right to her perſon and fortune; for he had prevailed on her to reſign to him her whole property, that was placed in the bank, on condition of his making her a ſettlement of five hundred per annum on his *Iriſh eſtate*. My huſband ſays that was a very young trick of the old lady.

"As ſoon as the ceremony was performed, they ſet off from Bath for London; where, after ſtaying a few days, they were to proceed to Ireland. At the inn where they ſlept the firſt night, the bride, on awaking the next morning, about ten o'clock, found herſelf alone. It is ſuppoſed he had contrived to to mix ſome laudanum in the wine ſhe drank at

at ſupper; after having ſat down to her toilette, ſhe rung for the chamber-maid to acquaint her *huſband* that ſhe was ready for breakfaſt. What, my dear young lady, muſt have been her ſurpriſe and rage, when ſhe was told the gentleman and his ſervant had ſet out at four o'clock, the horſes having been ordered the preceding evening?

"Struck with horror and diſmay, ſhe ruſhed by the *ſimpering* girl, and ran down into the inn-yard, exclaiming, 'When did my huſband go? what road did he take? did he leave no meſſage for me?' 'None at all, miſtreſs,' ſaid one of the oſtlers, who thought it a mighty good joke; 'I believe Paddy has given you the go by, my old girl, for you will be hardly able to overtake him, as he has got the ſtart of you by ſix hours, and tipped me a ſhiner for four of the fleeteſt nags in our ſtables.'

"On hearing this, ſhe raved like a diſtracted woman, execrated him, herſelf, and all around her. Unconſcious of what ſhe did, ſhe tore off her *wig*, and expoſed her

bare

bare head to the ſarcaſms of the ſhouting rabble, whom her frenzied behaviour had drawn around her, and who irritated her ſtill more by their coarſe jeſts, and laughing commiſeration.

"At this moment, an aunt of mine, who had been with a ſick relation to the hot-wells, drove into the yard; ſhe is an humane and ſenſible woman. She took pity on the poor maniac, and having reſcued her from this degrading ſituation, got her into a parlour, tried to ſooth and comfort her, deſiring an explanation of the cauſe of her anger; which, when ſhe was informed of, my aunt made inquiries for her trunks, &c. It was then found that her huſband had carried them all away with him, except a ſmall one that had been brought into the bed-room, containing her night clothes. Theſe, her watch, and about thirty guineas in her purſe, were *all* the vile fellow had left her.

"My aunt recommended it as her opinion, that ſhe ſhould proceed to London directly, as, no doubt, he would draw all her money

money out of the funds. She offered her a place in her chaiſe; this was thankfully accepted, and on the morning after their arrival in town, my relation accompanied her to the bank; but he had been too *quick* for them, it was all ſold out, and the poor lady, in a ſtate of the moſt ſhocking deſpondency, proclaimed herſelf a ruined *beggar*. There did not appear any way of tracing him, nor had ſhe money to make the attempt.

"She requeſted my aunt to add to the kindneſs ſhe had already ſhewn her, by recommending her to a cheap lodging, where ſhe might lay down and *die*; aſhamed of the folly of her conduct, ſhe was determined not to expoſe herſelf to the ſneers or rebuffs of her former friends. This floor was then empty; ſhe took poſſeſſion of it, but has ever ſince appeared deranged in her mind; ſhe uſed to walk the room night and day, talking aloud to herſelf, ſaying ſhe had been a vile ſinner, and had wronged the innocent; that ſhe had long proſpered by deception, but now her day of account was come:

her

her puniſhment was juſt, ſhe had loſt by folly what ſhe had acquired by wickedneſs: then again ſhe would rave about ſomebody ſhe called Ellinor; ſaid, ſhe had injured the child truſted to her care, and that ſhe ſhould be loſt to all eternity. We wiſhed her much to leave our houſe, for I feared ſhe would do herſelf a miſchief, and ſhe frightened and diſturbed all our other lodgers. My aunt ſaid it was inhuman to turn out ſuch an object of commiſeration; and that whatever were her faults, or even crimes, it was for fallible mortals like herſelf to pity, not puniſh them; that muſt be left to her Creator.

"After ſome time, ſhe appeared more compoſed, as if exhauſted by her exertions; ſhe would ſometimes try to write,—throw it by,—ſay ſhe would not criminate herſelf,—then lock all her papers up in a drawer in the bed-room, which I will deliver to you as ſoon as ſhe is no more; they may be of ſome uſe towards developing her myſterious conduct. About a week ſince, on her not ringing the bell in the morning, I was alarmed; and on entering

entering the room, found her in bed, but not able to ſpeak to be underſtood. We ſent for that Vanaſs, becauſe he advertiſes to cure even *incurable* diſeaſes. He ſaid that ſhe had been ſtruck by a paralytic ſtroke in the night, that had taken away the uſe of her right ſide. He has attended her ever ſince, but without producing any good effect by his infallible *noſtrum*. Yeſterday ſhe ſeemed to be reſtored to ſomething like reaſon; and ſtrenuouſly exerted herſelf to write, with her left hand, the note that was ſent to Park-lane. Her eagerneſs to ſee you, and the frightful agony ſhe threw herſelf into, when we made her ſenſible that you were not to be found, was terrible. Perceiving her become ſo evidently worſe after her diſappointment, induced me to ſend a verbal meſſage this morning, to haſten your viſit; as it was apparent that her mind laboured with ſomething ſhe wiſhed to diſcloſe."

Ellinor thanked her for this kind attention,

ſaying, that it was indeed of the utmoſt conſequence to her that Mrs. M'Cormick ſhould be enabled to explain ſome circumſtances on which the happineſs or miſery of her future life would greatly depend; but from her preſent appearance, ſhe was very apprehenſive that the myſterious conduct from which ſhe had ſo *long* ſuffered, would *never* be elucidated.

CHAP. XVII.

AT this inſtant the nurſe ſummoned them to the bed-ſide of the dying Mrs. M'Cormick; ſhe fixed her eyes on Ellinor, whom ſhe appeared to recollect, rolling them in their hollow ſockets, as if to implore pardon and pity. She extended her left hand, cold and clammy with the dews of death, and tried to preſs Ellinor's; the nerves had now loſt their elaſticity; ſhe made an attempt to ſpeak, but the words died away in hollow murmurs—not a ſyllable could be underſtood. She ſeemed to be ſenſible they could not;—again ſhe tried,—but her efforts only produced a piercing groan, that appalled the heart of the trembling Ellinor, who thought

it the laſt ſad ſhriek of ſuffering humanity.

After a few moments, in which Mrs. M'Cormick appeared to ſuffer great mental agony, ſhe pointed to a ſmall box that ſtood on the drawers, as if ſhe wiſhed it to be brought to her. Mrs. Foſter obſerved that probably the key was in her pocket; on ſearching it was found. Ellinor ſeated herſelf on the bed, opened it, and found the contents were letters, a watch, a large plain gold locket, with a knot of brilliants on its top. Her guardian made ſigns that ſhe ſhould wear it; ſhe gratified her with a ready compliance, by drawing the ribbon out of her cloak, and faſtening it round her neck, while ſhe hung the watch to her ſide. The dying Mrs. M'Cormick ſeemed now to have done every thing in her power, and appeared in conſequence to be more compoſed.

Mrs. Foſter prevailed on Ellinor to leave the room, and take a cup of coffee.

After

After dozing for ſome time, Mrs. M'Cormick waked in ſtrong convulſions, which ſhe ſtruggled againſt, for three hours, with more ſtrength than, from her emaciated frame, could have been ſuppoſed poſſible. This ſight, ſo new to our heroine, ever terrible to youthful imaginations, totally overpowered her ſhattered nerves. Ill as ſhe was when ſhe firſt entered the chamber of death, from having paſſed a ſleepleſs night and an agitated morning, added to expectation, hope, doubt, terror, pity, by which ſhe had been alternately aſſailed through the day, had worked up her feelings to that degree of tenſion, that the expiring groan of her guardian occaſioned her to fall upon the bed to all appearance as dead as the corpſe by her ſide.

Mrs. Foſter had her directly removed from the awful ſcene by which her mind was ſo impreſſed; and having reſtored her to ſenſe, enquired if ſhe ſhould ſend and acquaint the Dutcheſs with her indiſpoſition. It now ſtruck Ellinor

nor that this was the proper moment to tear herſelf from that dear and much-loved friend. She therefore deſired to know if Mrs. Foſter could accommodate her with a bed for the night as ſhe found herſelf too ill to be removed, and wiſhed to give directions for the funeral of Mrs. M'Cormick; and having very particular reaſons for requeſting that the Dutcheſs ſhould not be acquainted with her preſent viſit, therefore deſired, that whatever was the conſequence of her illneſs, ſhe might not be ſent to.

Mrs. Foſter, who was charmed with the ſuavity of manners diſplayed by our fair heroine, determined to obey her injunctions, while ſhe regretted that ſhe could not comply with her requeſt of being permitted to ſleep there, as the whole houſe was occupied, except the apartment they were now in. At this inſtant, when Ellinor felt diſtreſſed and mortified, a very reſpectable woman entered, in whoſe countenance goodneſs was perſonified, whom Mrs. Foſter introduced as her aunt; who,

who, on beholding the faded cheek and ſunken eye of Ellinor, and the evident diſappointment that ſhe appeared to experience at not being able to procure a lodging, without teaſing her with curious queſtions for her reaſons for not returning to her own home, taking it for granted they were good and ſufficient, and of conſequence enough to make her wiſh not to do ſo; ſhe addreſſed Ellinor, aſſuring her that ſhe had a neat and clean apartment on the ſecond floor, next to the room in which ſhe ſlept, which was very much at her ſervice, till ſhe had arranged Mrs. M'Cormick's affairs, and could ſuit herſelf more advantageouſly.

Her offer was gratefully accepted, Ellinor having before imbibed high notions of her philanthropy, humanity, and goodneſs of heart, from her friendly attention to her deceaſed guardian, in a ſituation in which too many, who call themſelves Chriſtians, would have paſſed on, like the *proud Phariſee*, thanking God that they had more ſenſe and worldly

prudence; while ſhe, like the *good Samaritan*, turned aſide to pour the oil of pity, and the balm of comfort, on the wounded ſpirit of a ſuffering fellow-creature.

Ellinor deſired that her late guardian might have a decent funeral ordered for her, which Mrs. Foſter, with the aſſiſtance of her aunt, undertook to arrange. This being ſettled, ſhe followed the old lady into a hackney coach, with the ſmall box of papers in her hand, on which alone ſhe depended for information to develope the myſtery of her birth.

They were ſet down in Pall-mall, when her companion announced herſelf as a Mrs. Needham; that ſhe was a widow, and ſupported herſelf by letting lodgings. Our readers will recollect in this good woman the hoſteſs of Mr. Howard; and in Mrs. Foſter, her pretty niece Patty; who, through the humane interference and good offices of that gentleman, had become the legal helpmate

of

of Mr. Frank Foſter; and, according to his plan laid down for them, had entered into partnerſhip with her father; who, having lately been left a well-ſtocked farm by an uſurious uncle, an old bachelor, had retired into the country to live upon it, and reſigned the grocery buſineſs to his ſon-in-law. Frank being now the father of two fine children, had, to uſe Mrs. Needham's own words, taken up from his former wild courſes, and was become a ſober huſband, a kind parent, and a good citizen, in the *real* acceptation of the word.

Mrs. Needham, who perceived that the illneſs of her gueſt was rapidly increaſing, had a bed inſtantly prepared; and when it was warmed, helped to undreſs, and aſſiſt her into it, perſuading Ellinor to take her favourite noſtrum, a baſon of whey; ſhe then left her to that repoſe ſhe appeared ſo much to want. Before Mrs. Needham retired for the night, ſhe entered the room on tip-toe, to look at her fair gueſt, who, though ſhe

appeared to ſleep, the old lady did not augur much benefit to her patient from thoſe broken and perturbed ſlumbers. She was reſtleſs, her fluſhed cheek, and burning hands, which Mrs. Needham felt, proclaimed that fever revelled in her veins; this at once determined her to paſs the night by the bed-ſide of her lovely young gueſt, who ſhe ſaw ſick and in deep affliction. This was enough to call forth her humanity; ſhe ſtopped not to enquire whether her ſufferings aroſe from her own indiſcretions, or the perſecutions of others. She had learned from a merciful Saviour, to ſay, "Let thoſe who are without ſin caſt the firſt ſtone."

In broken ſleep, and agitated ſtarts, Ellinor paſſed the hours till morning dawned, ſometimes rambling about her parents, her guardian, the Dutcheſs, the Marquis, and all thoſe with whom ſhe had lately been connected, and by whoſe conduct her mind had been impreſſed. Mrs. Needham, alarmed at her ſituation, ſent her maid at day-break for

or a gentleman of the faculty, who had ſeveral times, ſince the deceaſe of her huſband, ſaved her life without fee or reward; whoſe ſkill in his profeſſion was unequalled by every thing but the philanthropy he exerted in the cauſe of ſuffering humanity. He ſpoke comfort to the oppreſſed heart, healed the wounded, relieved their neceſſities, and literally made "the widow's heart ſing with joy," when by his knowledge he was enabled to reſtore the prop of her future exiſtence, the ſon of all her hopes, to her arms.

This gentleman, whoſe name was Richardſon, on his arrival, found Ellinor in a high fever, and quite delirious. He ſoothed the fears of Mrs. Needham, ſaying, that her good nurſing, and the youth of the patient, would do much in her favour; that if ſhe was kept quiet, and the medicines he ſhould preſcribe regularly adminiſtered, the young lady would ſoon do very well.

In the courſe of the day Mr. Foſter called on his aunt, at the requeſt of his wife, to enquire after her fair charge, whom he expreſſed a great deſire to ſee, for he ſaid, "Patty had talked ſo much about her beauty, and ſweetneſs of manners, that he was quite curious to get a look at her."

Mrs. Needham replied, "Ah! poor thing! you may ſee her, for ſhe knows nobody, although Mr. Richardſon ſays, in his good-natured way, that ſhe will do very well again; but I have my doubts, ſhe will never leave that bed, on which ſhe now lies, but to be carried where we muſt all follow when it pleaſes God."

Frank now approached the curtains, looking at Ellinor, who, from the feveriſh glow of her cheeks, and the bright and frenzied flaſhes her eyes emitted, looked more lovely than even in full health. As ſoon as he beheld her, he involuntarily exclaimed, "Merciful Heaven! it is the

beautiful Miſs Harcourt; the very lady that my honoured maſter is, at this moment, dying for love of; ſhe uſed to live at Sir James Lavington's, but ſince Mr. Howard has been abroad, that vile Le Neuf told me, ſhe had been turned away from Sir James Lavington's for being caught in a ſummer-houſe with his maſter, who, of the *two*, is a more precious rogue than himſelf; therefore I don't believe a word of the ſtory. But of this I am certain, that Mr. Howard will think he can never do enough to reward and thank you for the care you take of his favourite, who, I dare ſay, has been baſely treated to bring her to this ſituation. I ſhould have known her at once, only I was attending the ſhop, and did not go up ſtairs, for I had no deſire to ſee that *ghaſtful* old mad woman when ſhe was about to kick the bucket, who, I am truly glad, has taken herſelf off."

"For ſhame, Frank, how can you talk ſo unfeelingly of death?"

"To be ſure, that's wrong, Aunt; but I never could abide the old odd body, for I am ſure ſhe

ſhe was a wicked ſinner; let us think no more of her, but of Miſs Harcourt, who claims every thing Patty and I can do to ſerve her; if it pleaſes God, you can manage to nurſe her well, for we can never do too much for one whom our dear benefactor ſo loved and eſteemed."

"You ſay true, Frank; for though I would have done my duty, and taken proper care of her as a mere ſtranger, I will now exert myſelf to the utmoſt for the choſen object of that man, who, *next* to the Almighty, I love and reverence; to whoſe bounty and kind conſideration, thoſe I moſt value on earth owe every thing; for Miſs Harcourt, I ſhall, therefore, never think I can do enough."

In conſequence of this explanation, Patty left her own family to aſſiſt her Aunt in nurſing the poor invalid, who, by their united attentions, and the ſkilful applications of the worthy Richardſon, was, at the expiration of a fortnight, pronounced out of danger, though not in a ſtate of convaleſcence. When

reſtored

reſtored to reaſon, Ellinor felt how much ſhe muſt have been obliged for her recovery to the kind attention of theſe humane ſtrangers. She would have entered on the ſubject with Mrs. Needham, who ſtopped her, by ſaying, when ſhe had got more ſtrength, ſhe ſhould be happy to converſe with her; that it was the doctor's orders ſhe ſhould now be kept quiet, and attend to nothing but her health.

While we leave Ellinor to the friendly care of her good hoſteſs, we muſt look back to the Dutcheſs, who, when ſhe returned after her morning's ride, found Ellinor's note, acquainting her with the occaſion of her abſence. She rejoiced at this event, concluding that now her friend would be comparatively happy, when the ſuſpenſe of who ſhe might be, would end in the certainty of who ſhe was; for that point her Grace ſuppoſed would be aſcertained by the confeſſion of this dying penitent. She therefore waited with tolerable patience till dinner time; but when night came, and Ellinor did not return, and

ſhe

ſhe received no letter or meſſage to account for her not doing ſo, the Dutcheſs became ſeriouſly uneaſy. She ſent to Groſvenor-Square for the Marquis—he was gone to Lady Fanny Oſwald's rout; ſhe diſpatched a meſſenger to Sir Harry Hurry—he was alſo attending her Ladyſhip's party. What was to be done? ſhe had no clue to guide enquiry; none of the ſervants had heard where the coach was ordered to go; ſhe could not believe if Ellinor was at liberty that ſhe would not have wrote to her, knowing the ſtrength of her affection, and how unaccountably her abſence muſt diſtreſs her. This naturally led her to conjecture that it was a plot laid to inveigle Ellinor, and rob her of her protection, by ſome of thoſe men who wiſhed to get her into their power.

Her firſt ſuſpicions fell on Campley; the Duke of Southernwood ſhe did not miſtruſt, as he was ſaid, at this time, to be offering his adoration to a French *figurante* of the opera-houſe, to view whoſe agile curvets, and elaſtic capers, he conſtantly took his ſtand at the bottom of Fop's-Alley.

Her

Her ſon ſhe would not ſuſpect of being baſe enough to break through the laws of honour and hoſpitality in the perſon of *her* gueſt; beſides he was acquainted with her determination, never to forgive ſo glaring an atrocity. Campley then *muſt* be the *man*; who had been cured of his wound ſome time ſince, againſt whoſe artful *head* ſhe was now tempted to wiſh that her hand had taken a ſurer *aim*.

As the Dutcheſs pondered upon theſe various ſuppoſitions, ſhe figured to her imagination Ellinor ſuffering under every ſort of inſult, and vainly imploring her aſſiſtance. Unable longer to bear this ſtate of incertitude, ſhe ſent a note to the Marquis, requeſting his immediate attendance, who, aſtoniſhed at the receipt of it, directly obeyed the ſummons, though trembling with apprehenſion, fearing Ellinor had broke her promiſe, and had made his mother acquainted with the temerity of his behaviour that morning. Nothing could exceed his ſurpriſe when he

was

was acquainted with the abſence and ſilence of Ellinor. He thought he ſaw the cauſe in the avowal ſhe had made, when they laſt parted, of never ſeeing him *more*; and to prevent giving the true reaſon, ſhe was willing to appear ungrateful to her benefactreſs, rather than ruin him in the opinion of the Dutcheſs. While he admired the high-ſpirited magnanimity of that mind which enabled her to make ſuch a ſacrifice, that his conſcience whiſpered him he was very far from deſerving, he felt keen regret and mortification that the lovely caſket that contained ſuch mental beauties, would in all human probability, never be in his *poſſeſſion*.

Theſe thoughts recurred to him at the moment, and he inſtantly reſolved to treat Ellinor's abſence as mere *badinage*. He informed the Dutcheſs that he did not think Campley was the falſe Knight that had carried away the fair Lady, as he had juſt left him at Lady Fanny Oſwald's, where he had been all the evening deeply punting at the

faro

faro-table, with his ſenſes ſo totally abſorbed by the glittering heap in his view, that he appeared inſenſible to all the *witcheries* of beauty that he was ſurrounded by. "Your Grace muſt be convinced, were your doubts realized, that it would be impoſſible for him to ſet coolly calculating the odds of Fortune, had thoſe of Love been ſo much in his favour, as having the beauteous Ellinor in his poſſeſſion. But I will, if it is your pleaſure, return to Lady Fanny's, and call upon him to produce the peerleſs maid; though, truth to ſay, ſo many are the ſtrange adventures of which ſhe has been the heroine, ſuch hair-breadth eſcapes, ſuch wondrous perils by ſea and by land, that Clelia's were nothing to them. If her champion was a ſecond Orlando Furioſo, or *even* La Mancha's Knight, he would find full employment for his ſword to defend her."

The Dutcheſs viewed him, while he thus ſpoke, with vexation and contempt.

"In

"In anſwer to your unfeeling attempts at wit, young man, I have only to ſay, it is ſo unnatural at the preſent moment, that I muſt ſuppoſe them meant to cover the chagrin and diſappointment which you are ſuffering at this time, if I am not much miſtaken. I fear, Sir, you have more to do with this young woman's quitting my houſe than you chuſe ſhould appear. I am informed you were with her an hour and an half while I was taking my airing this morning.

"Bloſſom tells me, you were on your knees to Ellinor for a certain period of that time; ſhe quitted you in great ſorrow, and was found weeping when the man returned with what I ſuſpect to be a fabricated tale, and took her away in a hackney coach. This, added to your *ill-timed* irony, makes me ſuſpect that ſhe is in your power at this very moment. You have long ſince been made acquainted with what my ſentiments would be on your adopting ſuch a line of conduct, therefore I ſhall not trouble you, or myſelf, by repeating them."

"Madam,

"Madam, how did your ſervant come by the intelligence ſhe communicated to you?"

"Not honeſtly, I believe. Her account is, that ſhe heard, what ſhe called, high voices in the breakfaſt-room, where ſhe was going to deliver a meſſage to Ellinor; that, afraid to enter, ſhe peeped through the key-hole, and ſays, ſhe ſaw you on your bended knees, making love to Miſs Harcourt. I have no doubt but Bloſſom made as much uſe of her *ears*, as ſhe acknowledges ſhe did of her *eyes*; but I ordered her not to repeat to me one word of a diſcourſe ſhe had, with ſo much impropriety, made herſelf acquainted with. For this nefarious conduct I mean to diſcharge her at my return to Hampſhire; I ſhall not do ſo at preſent, becauſe I will not furniſh her with the temptation of throwing herſelf on this devoted town, that has already ripened her for vice as it has ſo many of her betters. You may be aſſured, Marquis, I never did, never ſhall, condeſcend to the meanneſs of ſetting ſpies upon your actions, or artfully tamper with ſervants to ſteal into your

your ſecrets. Had you ſpared your improper overtures to my friend, who ought, by you, to have been held *ſacred*, I ſhould never have required an account of your actions; but now return Ellinor to me, innocent as I know ſhe was, or never ſee me more."

"I entreat your Grace to believe me, when I avow, by what I hold moſt dear on earth, your parental love, by all my hopes of happineſs here and hereafter, that Ellinor is not in my power; that I am totally ignorant with whom, or where ſhe now is. I have never ſeen her ſince breakfaſt; to the truth of this I am ready to bind myſelf by the moſt ſolemn oath, if you ſtill diſpute my aſſeverations."

"Marquis, I *muſt* believe you do not know where Ellinor is concealed after what you have juſt avowed; I ſhall therefore truſt to time to unravel this myſterious event."

The Marquis returned to Lady Fanny Oſwald's, to make himſelf amends, in her *inviting ſmiles* for the loſs of Ellinor, and his

his mother's recent diſpleaſure, who for many days employed all the means ſhe could deviſe to trace and recover her loſt favourite, ſtill believing, that ſomething very terrible muſt have happened that prevented her removing thoſe apprehenſions ſhe muſt be certain the Dutcheſs ſuffered on her account.

Hourly expecting a letter to acquaint her where ſhe then was, a fortnight elapſed; when hearing no tidings of, or from Ellinor, London, which ſhe always diſliked, now ſhe had loſt her companion, became her deteſtation, and ſhe prepared to leave it, and fly to thoſe active purſuits by which ſhe had been hitherto enabled to baffle the attacks of *ennui*.

The Dutcheſs was going to ſtep into her carriage when Sir James Lavington rode up to the door, being juſt returned to town from his ſeat in Berkſhire, whence he had come poſt on the receipt of a letter from his daughter, who recapitulating the news of the

the day, mentioned that the immaculate Ellinor had made another elopement; having run away from the Dutcheſs, nobody knew with whom, or what was become of her. Marquis Fearleſs had brought the intelligence to Lady Fanny Oſwald's, where ſhe and her mother then were; that it had occaſioned a number of *bets* to be made, who was the happy man that had carried off the fair *incognita*.

Lady Fanny offered to take the odds, that ſhe was ſnug at the ſeat of the Marquis in Yorkſhire; Mrs. Campley inſiſted, that the Colonel could give the beſt account of her preſent reſidence; and that gentleman vowed he ſhould have thought himſelf ſuperlatively bleſſed to have been the choſen *friend* of ſo lovely a woman; but, truth to ſay, he was not ſo fortunate; the juvenile Duke of Southernwood was moſt likely to be the enviable man, who had bid ſo high to gain that celebrity, while his Grace ſwore

ſome

ſome half-ſcore oaths, antique and modern, that he knew nothing about her, but was willing to take their bets that Harry Hurry was the lad, who, by humouring this ſkittiſh filly, and underſtanding her paces, had now won the *race* from all his competitors. The Baronet vowed they had all been croſſing and joſtling for ſome time, and at laſt had run on the *wrong* ſide of the poſt; that he was diverted to ſee the hounds all at fault, the purſuers thrown out, and puſs ſtole away.

This letter Sir James gave the Dutcheſs; it had agonized his honeſt heart, and tore open the wounds Ellinor's former ſufferings had occaſioned him to feel, for he ever condemned himſelf as the author of all her misfortunes, thinking, that by his unguarded conduct, he had expoſed her to the vindictive and perſecuting malice of her enemies. He would have given half his fortune to ſhield her innocence from injury; but where was ſhe

to be found? by whom was ſhe oppreſſed? theſe were queſtions the Dutcheſs was unable to anſwer: ſhe could only mingle with his, her unavailing regrets, ſtrenuouſly recommending it to him, to be indefatigable in ſearching out, and reſtoring to her, their mutual favourite.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

WE will now return to our fair invalid, who began to recover her health, but not her ſpirits. She requeſted Mrs. Needham to procure her a black taffety robe, as ſhe thought it decent to wear mourning for her late guardian; though ſhe was yet to learn whether ſhe was related to her, or by what motives ſhe had been actuated, when ſhe appeared to take a part in every thing that concerned her, for ſhe had not yet opened the box of papers, from which alone ſhe could now expect information. Her attentive nurſe, Mrs. Needham, acting under the power delegated to her by the worthy Richardſon, had reſtricted her from every exertion that could affect her ſhattered nerves; for he

obſerved, that in the debilitated ſtate that her fever had left her in, ſurpriſe, joy, or ſorrow would be equally deſtructive, and might produce the moſt fatal conſequences. To prevent theſe threatened evils, Mrs. Needham had locked up the box and all the papers that had been found in Mrs. M'Cormick's drawers. Ellinor's impatience to peruſe their contents was extreme; but the kindneſs of the intention which prevented the gratification of her curioſity, made her quietly acquieſce in the impoſed reſtrictions.

Mrs. Needham had acquainted her with Mr. Foſter's recollection of her perſon, and her being the lady his late maſter was ſo violently in love with; and in the fulneſs of that gratitude with which her heart ever overflowed toward Mr. Howard, and to induce Ellinor to think as highly of his merits as herſelf, ſhe recapitulated all the ſtory of his generoſity to her brother, his conſiderate goodneſs to Frank and Patty, and his kindneſs to Lieutenant Worth's family. As ſhe never

never was tired of praiſing her favourite, it was her conſtant topic of converſation, while ſhe ſat knitting by the couch on which Ellinor reclined, who liſtened with pleaſure to the grateful effuſions of her honeſt heart, and joined her tears to thoſe of genuine ſenſibility that bedewed the furrowed cheeks of this affectionate woman, as ſhe related the various humane actions of the beneficent hero of her idolatry.

Ellinor heard her with a ſigh of regret, as ſhe was compelled to draw the compariſon between the character of the man exalted to fame by his good deeds, the unaſſuming Howard, who, mild and merciful, lived only when ſuccouring the houſeleſs child of griping Poverty from the ruthleſs fangs of Power, with the artful, worthleſs, deſtructive ſeducer of truſting confidence, the ambitious heir of the ancient dukedom of Dreadnought.

" Who, ſunk to ſordid int'reſt, feels no more
" That noble wiſh, that never cloyed deſire,
" Which ſelfiſh joy diſdaining, ſeeks alone
" To bleſs the dearer object of its flame."

Ellinor was compelled to give the meed of due praiſe to Howard, while her heart revolted from, and deſpiſed the duplicity of the Marquis, whoſe faults ſhe had not ſought to aſcertain. Miſled by a blind paſſion, it had conducted her to the brink of that abyſs, down which ſhe once dreamed he was about to precipitate her, determined to cure this fatal delirium by rigorous coercion, having experienced the inutility of palliatives to extirpate a diſeaſe which ever gains ſtrength from the weakneſs of the patient.

During the quiet hours ſhe had paſſed in the torpor of a ſick chamber, her mind, ſoaring above the mundane ſyſtem that unites it to corporeal exiſtence, had found time for a retroſpective view of her whole conduct ſince the Marquis firſt entered the drawing-room in Park-Lane. In this review, ſhe diſcovered much in herſelf to condemn; all the mortifications ſhe had been ſubjected to ſuffer from this ill-placed paſſion, aroſe from not checking thoſe propenſities the inſtant ſhe perceived

perceived them; that it was madneſs, ſituated as ſhe was, ever to have encouraged; or if it was too powerful for Reaſon, too ſtrong for Prudence, ſhe ought immediately to have left the Dutcheſs, and ſhunned the ſeductive eloquence of the Marquis, by burying, in a total ſecluſion, her improper attachment; not have quieted doubt and lulled ſuſpicion aſleep, by the artful and never to be truſted doctrine of *Platoniſm*.

Ellinor, thus enabled to combat Love with Reaſon, found every day the latter gain ground; as her health mended, her mind regained its energy. She now made rapid ſtrides towards convaleſcence; the colour reviſited her lips, the blood mantled in her cheek; ſhe therefore entreated Mr. Richardſon, as ſhe was faſt recovering by his ſkilful management, that he would permit Mrs. Needham to allow her the uſe of pen and ink, as ſhe had already been too long negligent of friends, whom her own feelings informed her ſuffered much from the enforced

ſilence ſhe had been obliged to ſubmit to. On promiſing him that ſhe would avoid all violent exertions of mind, ſhe gained her point.

The firſt uſe ſhe made of her liberty, was to write to the Dutcheſs. In conſequence of the aſſurances given the Marquis, that ſhe would not acquaint his mother of the inſult he had offered her, ſhe was precluded from aſſigning the *real* motive of her not returning to Park-Lane, or of naming her preſent reſidence. She determined to keep her word with him, though conſcious ſhe muſt appear criminal, certainly ungrateful to ſo generous a benefactreſs. This was a hard trial—to be ſuſpected of a vice from which her ſoul revolted, by the woman whoſe good opinion ſhe would cheerfully have died to retain. But was it not to ſave that beloved friend the agonizing pang of knowing that the ſon of her fondeſt hopes, the cheriſhed ſolace of her declining years, was not worthy of ſuch a mother; to prevent his being alie-

nate

nated from her heart and houſe for ever, that ſhe was content to appear in a doubtful point of view. Away, then, with all ſelfiſh conſiderations; a time might yet arrive, when ſhe ſhould be enabled to clear her character, and avow her preſent motives for ſilence; then thoſe would reſtore her with redoubled claims to the friendſhip and eſteem of the Dutcheſs. Ellinor wrote and rewrote, but could not pleaſe herſelf. After having torn many ſheets of paper, ſhe ſent the following

LETTER.

"I intreat your Grace to extend that mercy and forgiveneſs to your once-favoured Ellinor, which ſo conſpicuouſly marks your character; allow her, in deſpite of thoſe appearances that ſhe is but too conſcious muſt make againſt her, ſtill to retain that place in your eſteem with which ſhe was once ſo honoured and happy. Believe me not unworthy that predilection

that your kind partiality favoured me with. Think not I can ever forget the numerous obligations I owe to your unwearied friendſhip, your generous bounty; or ever look back to the hours I have paſſed in your eſtimable ſociety, without the moſt lively gratitude for the former, the moſt poignant regret that I am obliged, from circumſtances I cannot at preſent explain, to rob myſelf of the latter.

"I have nothing to ſupport me in this ſad hour of trial but conſcious rectitude; nothing but perfect innocence to guide my ſteps through a perilous world; in which, ever ſince I entered it, from a ſtrange fatality of cauſes and events, artifice and miſconception, I have found myſelf entangled in inextricable difficulties. I have been a ſacrifice to the vices and follies of others, who have contrived to make me appear the aggreſſor; a chain of circumſtances has hitherto aided theſe deceptions. I truſt the time will arrive when my honour and rectitude will be cleared from the load of calumny and prejudice

judice, under which they are now obſcured from all but the penetrating eye of Omnipotence. In that hour of honeſt triumph, the firſt gratification my heart can feel will be to exonerate myſelf from blame in your opinion, and claim again that friendſhip I ſhall then be worthy of partaking. Till that ardently deſired period arrives, I muſt continue to keep the place of my reſidence a ſecret, and be ſilent as to my future intentions.

" I have begun this letter to your Grace with what I ſhould have concluded it, had I been writing according to rule; but I have the honour of addreſſing one who values the genuine language of the ſoul more than the mode in which it is conveyed: as this is dictated from the warm ebullitions of that heart, whoſe animated fervour forgot the form in the matter that guided the pen, I know I ſhall be excuſed. I ſhould otherwiſe have commenced by acquainting your Grace, that when I quitted your hoſpitable roof, the perſon by whom I was then ſent for,

was the ſame who, when I recited my ſtory, I called Guardian. She was ſpeechleſs when I arrived; and the ſhock of ſeeing her expire in extreme agonies, not being permitted the comfort of expiating her offences, by confeſſing her ſins; the mortification I ſuffered when I ſaw all my long-cheriſhed hopes of knowing, by her means, to whom I owed my birth, were going to be rendered abortive, and the ſecret buried in the grave of this too late penitent woman, diſappointment, vexation, and terror, on hearing her her laſt groan, threw me into a violent fit that terminated in a frenzy fever, from which I am but juſt recovered, and this is the firſt time I have been permitted to uſe a pen. A ſmall box of letters, and a plain gold locket, that promiſes no information, are all that I have left to trace my parents by. The papers are ſigned with fictitious names; on the hand-writing being acknowledged alone depends the diſcovery I ſo ardently wiſh.

" This, in the chapter of accidents, is ſo unlikely to happen, that I now, for the

firſt time, reſign *hope*, and am bending my mind to my ſituation, determined to gain a ſubſiſtence in future by my talents; attempting, in the private vale of life, to eſcape thoſe cenſures and inſults which I have been expoſed to ſuffer in the great world, even under *your* protection. I know you will be pleaſed to hear, that I have, in ſorrow and in ſickneſs, met the kindeſt attention, the moſt ſoothing commiſeration, from benevolent merit in humble life; who having, by unwearied aſſiduity, reſtored me to exiſtence, will, I flatter myſelf, aſſiſt my honeſt endeavours to preſerve it. I muſt requeſt your Grace, who, I am informed, has left Park-Lane, to order a ſervant to ſend my clothes and harp, directed to be left for Mr. Foſter, at the White Horſe Cellar, Piccadilly.

"To the good and ever-reſpected Sir James Lavington, to whom it would be improper for me to write, I take the liberty to deſire you will ſhew this letter: it is all the exculpation my ſituation will allow me to make for my preſent myſterious conduct, that

that Malice will condemn, but Friendſhip may extenuate. From my humble abode I ſhall offer up my prayers for the happineſs of the two beings who, on earth, are moſt loved and honoured by her who begs leave to ſubſcribe herſelf your Grace's moſt obliged and obedient ſervant,

"ELLINOR HARCOURT."

Her heart was relieved by having done what ſhe felt a duty. She now ſet about laying a plan for her future life. Mrs. M'Cormick not leaving money enough to diſcharge the expences of her funeral, and what was due for her lodgings, Ellinor made up the deficiency, which left her miſtreſs of about fifteen guineas; how to pay her doctor and Mrs. Needham with a ſum ſo inadequate, diſtreſſed her generous heart. She determined to ſpeak to her kind hoſteſs, and to reveal her future plan of operations; but when ſhe began to talk of her obligations, and to aſk for the account of what ſhe was indebted, this good creature, conſcious that

Ellinor

Ellinor was not rich, and that ſhe was as much diſtreſſed by circumſtances as in mind, at the preſent moment, though ſhe ſought not to pry into the cauſes, ſhe poſitively refuſed to accept any thing for her board, lodging, and attendance; ſaying, that when ſhe was the wife of her good Mr. Howard, which ſhe was certain ſure would one day happen, then ſhe ſhould pay her all, and intereſt to boot.

Ellinor inſiſted on a bill; ſaid ſhe could not bear to remain under *pecuniary* obligations, though ſhe was willing to be her debtor for attention and friendſhip, till Fortune enabled her to repay them. "Since you will not tell me what I owe you, I will pay you as I can afford, not as you merit." She then forced ten guineas into her hand. Nothing more was ſaid, as Mr. Richardſon juſt then entered to enquire after her health; to whom ſhe preſented her purſe, containing the remaing five, telling him that ſhe did not mean to offer that trifle as a payment for his

ſkill

ſkill and attendance, but as an earneſt of what ſhe would do when more was in her power.

"Well then," jocoſely ſaid this truly diſintereſted ſon of Apollo, returning her donation, "you muſt give me leave to receive the principal and intereſt at the ſame time, becauſe then it will be a *weighty* concern. Now, my good young lady, I muſt take leave of you, as, from your perfect reſtoration to health, I cannot viſit you any longer in my medical capacity; I ſolicit your permiſſion ſometimes to pay my reſpects as a friend, when I look in upon my good Mrs. Needham."

Ellinor, having cheerfully acquieſced with his requeſt, and thanked him for his attentions, was about to renew her intreaties that he would accept her purſe, when he ſtarted up, ſaying—

"I cannot ſtay any longer to liſten even to your perſuaſive voice, my amiable young lady; for the duties of humanity whiſper that I ought

I ought at this moment to be on the road to Richmond, where I am going to dreſs the wounds of a poor man who yeſterday morning fell from a ſcaffold that was erected to beautify a cottage *ornée* in that neighbourhood, a recent purchaſe of the Right Honourable Viſcount Torpedo. Luckily for Sam Stucco, her ladyſhip had juſt ſent an expreſs for me to dreſs an *alarming ſcratch* on her fore finger, received from her favourite Perſian Cat, Fatima."

"Are you not jeſting, Mr. Richardſon?" aſked Mrs. Needham.

"Serious, upon my honour, good Madam; but keep your wonder and reſentment for the *end* of my ſtory. As the carriage drove up to the door, my attention was arreſted by the ſight of a poor mangled object, that was writhing with agony in the hall. I ſtopped to enquire the cauſe, and my humanity prompted me to ſee what I could do to relieve him. While I was ſearching the ſkull to diſcover if it was fractured, Lady Torpedo's woman brought me a meſſage from

from her miſtreſs, which ſhe delivered with all the affected airs gleaned from her lady-ſhip; holding a ſmelling-bottle to her noſe, and covering her eyes with her handkerchief, that ſhe might not *faint* at the ſight of a broken head.

" Mr. Richardſon, my Lady is moſt extremely tortured by the *wound* in her finger, and diſtracted with apprehenſion for fear of the conſequences; they may be very terrible, if the dear Fatima ſhould be *inſane*, and have the *cattifobia*. She therefore hopes that you have not neglected to bring the *Hormſkirk* medicine in your pocket, that it may be immediately adminiſtered to the beauteous creature, who my lady would not have die for a *thouſand guineas*. As to the man that lies there, who has made the hall ſo naſty, juſt like a ſlaughter-houſe, Lady Torpedo ſays ſhe is a ſubſcriber to the Middleſex, and he may be taken there, for ſhe cannot think of making her houſe an hoſpital, or of paying you for curing him, becauſe he thought fit to be frightened

frightened, tumble off, and break his bones at her ſcreams when Fatima flew at her.".

" I once knew," replied Ellinor, " Lady Torpedo, and have often had occaſion to wonder at the ſtrange mixture in her character, that appears to be compounded of liſtleſs inanity, drawn from the dregs of vindictive pride and inſolent malice. I can therefore give her credit for the moſt unfeeling conduct."

" Your ideas of this high-bred woman of quality are perfectly correct. Who could avow, that ſhe would give a thouſand guineas to ſave the life of a cat, and conſign a fellow-mortal to an hoſpital, far removed from his wife and children, who received his wounds through compaſſion for her? On enquiry I found this was the fact. The poor man, who was working on the ſcaffold before her dreſſing-room window, ſaw Fatima ſpring at her Ladyſhip; alarmed at her danger, and terrified at her yells, in turning quick to call for aſſiſtance, his foot ſlipped, and he fell. His ſkull is not fractured, though he has

has ſome deep contuſions on his head, and his ſhoulder is diſlocated; but I hope ſoon to ſet him upon his legs again. I therefore anſwered her meſſenger, that if her Ladyſhip would wait till I had dreſſed this poor fellow's wounds, as delay might prove fatal, and taken him home to his cottage in my carriage, I would immediately return and attend her; but I was not to be deterred by the threat of not paying my bill from what I thought my duty. The reſult was, that I took Stucco home, and left him as comfortable as his caſe would admit.

"When I returned to Lady Torpedo's, I was informed by a high-ſcented laced lacquey, that my profeſſional viſits to Roſemount would in future be diſpenſed with, as his lady had ſent expreſs to town for Mr. Slaſham, determined to be no longer attended by a perſon who could inſult her dignity by making her finger wait to be dreſſed till he had plaſtered the head of a bricklayer's labourer.

"I begged

" I begged my compliments to his lady, and that I was rejoiced at being relieved from attending to the querulous complaints, fancied ailments, delicate nerves, and tender ſenſibilities of a woman who, with perfect *ſang froid*, could devote the father of five helpleſs children to periſh for want of that immediate aſſiſtance his caſe required, becauſe her favourite cat had ſet his heart on breakfaſting upon a Canary bird, and, in the ſcramble, had ſcratched her fingers. Thus I received and made my *congé* from the family of Viſcount Torpedo.

" I am now going to ſee this poor man, and carry him ſome dreſſings, though it is more than probable I ſhall be diſmiſſed from ſome half dozen more of my quality patients for not ſeeing them *firſt*; for I have at this moment two Dutcheſſes, a Duke, an Earl, a Counteſs, a Dignitary of the Church, and a Luminary of the law, with a long liſt of *et ceteras*, impatiently expecting me. But Sam Stucco is ſmarting with his wounds, and I cannot refuſe to relieve his ſufferings."

Ellinor

Ellinor now made another attempt to force the *mite* of gratitude on this eccentric diſciple of Galen; when he ſeriouſly deſired till money was leſs an object to her, and more ſo to him, that ſhe would not affront him by ſaying another word upon the ſubject; for if ſhe perſiſted, it would baniſh him from her preſence for ever.

This threat effectually ſilenced her, for ſhe revered him for the goodneſs of his heart, admired his cheerful urbanity, and reſpected his ſcientific knowledge; ſhe aſſured him ſhe was content to retain his friendſhip on his own terms, but intreated him to take a couple of guineas to this poor man, his patient.

"No, my dear young lady, at preſent it is not neceſſary, for *all* my quality patrons are not ſo callous to the ſufferings of their fellow-creatures as Lady Torpedo, whoſe conduct they deſpiſe and execrate as *much* as your fair ſelf. Behold here are ten guineas that

I am going to take him from the charming Dutcheſs of D——e, whoſe beauteous countenance and faſcinating ſmiles are juſt emblems of her mind; whom faſhionable follies courtly apathy, or the example of the *good company* with whom ſhe is obliged to aſſociate, have not been able to diveſt of virtuous conduct, ſuavity of manners, and melting charity. This lovely woman is ever active in the cauſe of ſuffering humanity; her heart commiſerates the various inflictions by which the ſons and daughters of Poverty are oppreſſed, from whoſe tale of woe ſhe turns not away; while her ever-ready purſe is open to relieve the indigent, and ſupport the oppreſſed. She drops the tear of ſenſibility for thoſe ſorrows that are *beyond* her power or fortune to alleviate."

Richardſon having finiſhed his philippic on Lady Torpedo, and his eulogium on his favourite Dutcheſs, precipitated himſelf down ſtairs, jumped into his carriage, bidding his coachman make haſte; while he left his

hearers in admiration of a character, that in a venal and frivolous age ſpurned intereſted motives, and ſought only the riches of good works.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

THE converſation with Mrs. Needham, which the entrance of Mr. Richardſon had interrupted, was recommenced by Ellinor, who recounted to this good woman all the events of her paſt life, excepting her partiality for the Marquis, and his recent behaviour. She explained the various inſults ſhe had been expoſed to receive from mankind, thoſe falſe points of view in which her conduct had been placed by women, who had condemned her without mercy from poſitions drawn from miſapplication of circumſtances. By theſe miſrepreſentations, her character was ruined with *many*, and rendered doubtful to *all*. That ſo ſituated, ſhe could not think of returning to the Dutcheſs of Dreadnought,

much leſs conſent to marry any man, particularly the one alluded to by Mrs. Needham, whoſe high ſenſe of honour, and rectitude of conduct, ſhould not be ſullied by allying itſelf to a woman over whoſe fame Diſtruſt had ſhook her baleful pinions; the wife of Howard, like Cæſar's, ſhould not be ſuſpected. She concluded this mark of her confidence, by requeſting Mrs. Needham's aſſiſtance to enable her to procure a ſubſiſtence by her own exertions. This ſhe wiſhed to do far removed from all her former connexions; and ſhe then hoped, by aſſuming another name, ſhe might avoid thoſe perſecutions that had ſo unremittingly purſued her ever ſince ſhe left the convent.

The kind creature to whom this tale was addreſſed, had not heard it without the accompaniment of ſighs and tears; ſhe promiſed to do every thing in her power to procure her ſuch a ſituation as ſhe wiſhed, but earneſtly intreated that ſhe would continue to make her houſe her home till Mr. Howard's

return to England. This Ellinor poſitively refuſed; the reaſons ſhe aſſigned for that rejection were too potent for Mrs. Needham to combat; ſhe was therefore obliged ſorrowfully to acquieſce in the determination of her young friend.

Mrs. Needham, now begging pardon for taking the liberty, enquired if among the papers Mrs. M'Cormick had left, there were none that gave any light who her parents were. Ellinor aſſured her that, far from being offended, ſhe was grateful for the intereſt ſhe took in her concerns; ſhe had ſeen nothing except the locket ſhe had worn on her boſom ever ſince ſhe placed it there at the inſtance of her dying guardian, and a parcel of letters, that appeared to conſiſt of a correſpondence between thoſe ſhe conjectured to be her parents, which beſpoke them much above the vulgar, as thoſe of the lady breathed the tender ſentiments of a refined and virtuous affection, while the gentleman's were wrote with all the ardour of paſſion reſtrained by honour.

They

They were not dated, but ſigned with the fictitious names of Celadon and Amelia.

The laſt of them, which appeared to have been wrote in an agony of ſorrow, was from Celadon; in which he deplored the avarice of a father, who was about to ſever two hearts Nature had formed to be united. He intreats his beloved Amelia will meet him at the uſual hour, at the root-houſe in the wood, to take a laſt adieu; when he will return her thoſe faithful tranſcripts of affection, thoſe dear letters which he had fondly flattered himſelf ſhe would have permitted him to retain as the companions of his exile. But ſhe had reclaimed them, and he would obey her, though by him they were ſo highly valued.

Mrs. Needham now thought, with her young friend, that to ſome fortunate chance alone ſhe muſt be indebted for what appeared at preſent buried in profound myſtery. Ellinor had not yet overlooked thoſe papers left in the drawers of her late guardian; but by the

the curſory view ſhe had taken of them, they appeared to have been ſcrawled by the hand of inſanity. From the temper of mind in which they were wrote, ſhe did not flatter herſelf with much information.

Now left alone, ſhe ſat down to the taſk of decyphering what had employed the time of Mrs. M'Cormick for the ſix weeks ſhe had been a wretched wife. Some of theſe papers were addreſſed to the man ſhe called her faithleſs huſband; execrating, in the moſt ſhocking terms, his baſeneſs and her folly. Others were meant for Ellinor, accuſing herſelf as the author of all the miſeries that her mother had ſuffered, and thoſe that ſhe might yet have to encounter. Then again ſhe intreated her forgiveneſs, and ſolicited her to intercede for her to the throne of the Almighty. Ellinor could make out nothing to the purpoſe from theſe effuſions, that appeared the mere effervescence of a heated imagination; ſhe therefore threw them into the fire. On going to replace the letters written

written by Celadon and Amelia, in the box in which ſhe had received them from her guardian, ſhe thought, from the ſhallowneſs within compared to its outward appearance, it might have a falſe bottom. On turning and examining it very cloſely, ſhe perceived a ſmall ſpring; by preſſing her finger, it opened. With a palpitating heart, ſhe found it contained a manuſcript, evidently written by her guardian.

She dared hardly truſt herſelf to breathe; her hand trembled with eager curioſity. "Oh God! I thank thee," ſhe cried, "who haſt heard my prayers, and will at laſt permit me to know to whom I am indebted for my exiſtence." Her heart throbbing with renovated hope and eager expectation, ſhe ſat down to peruſe the following Confeſſions.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

BRITISH 29 AP 92 MUSEUM